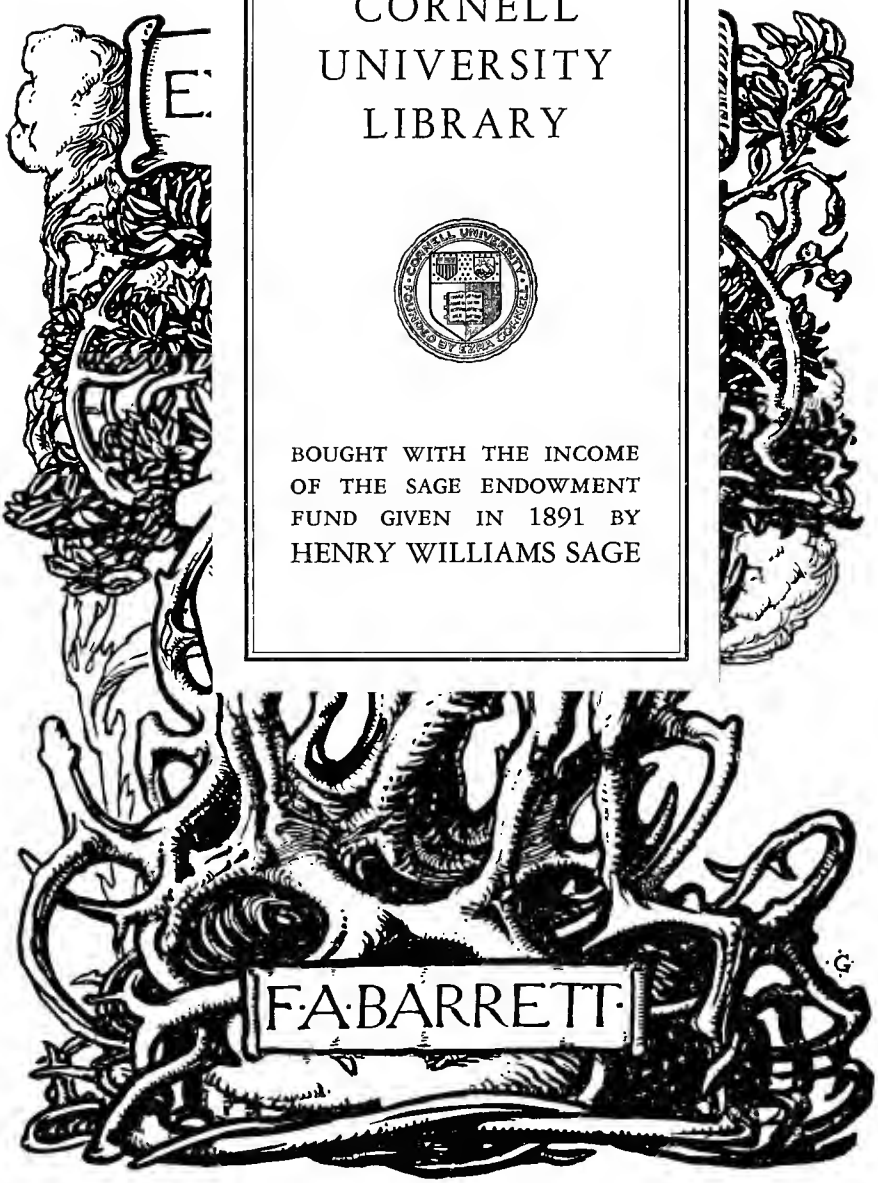

Edition de Luxe

The Life and Works

of

Charles Lamb

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

VOLUME X

The Letters

OF

Charles Lamb

Newly Arranged, with Additions

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

ALFRED AINGER

VOLUME II

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CHAPTER II—(*Continued*)

1800—1809

LETTERS TO COLERIDGE, MANNING, AND OTHERS

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER LXXX.] *December* 13, 1800.

I have received your letter *this moment*, not having been at the office. I have just time to scribble down the epilogue. To your epistle I will just reply, that I will certainly come to Cambridge before January is out; I'll come *when I can*. You shall have an amended copy of my play early next week. Mary thanks you; but her handwriting is too feminine to be exposed to a Cambridge gentleman, though I endeavour to persuade her that you understand algebra, and must understand her hand. The play is the man's you wot of; but for Heaven's sake do not mention it: it is to come out in a feigned name, as one Tobin's. I will omit the introductory

lines which connect it with the play, and give you the concluding tale, which is the mass and bulk of the epilogue. The name is *Jack Incident.* It is all about promise-breaking: you will see it all, if you read the *papers.*

"Jack, of dramatic genius justly vain,
Purchased a renter's share at Drury Lane;
A prudent man in every other matter,
Known at his club-room for an honest hatter;
Humane and courteous, led a civil life,
And has been seldom known to beat his wife;
But Jack is now grown quite another man,
Frequents the green-room, knows the plot and plan
Of each new piece,
And has been seen to talk with Sheridan!
In at the play-house just at six he pops,
And never quits it till the curtain drops,
Is never absent on the *author's night,*
Knows actresses and actors too——by sight;
So humble, that with Suett he'll confer,
Or take a pipe with plain Jack Bannister;
Nay, with an author has been known so free,
He once suggested a catastrophe—
In short, John dabbled till his head was turn'd;
His wife remonstrated, his neighbours mourn'd,
His customers were dropping off apace,
And Jack's affairs began to wear a piteous face.
One night his wife began a curtain lecture;
'My dearest Johnny, husband, spouse, protector,
Take pity on your helpless babes and me,
Save us from ruin, you from bankruptcy—
Look to your business, leave these cursed plays,
And try again your old industrious ways.'
Jack who was always scared at the Gazette,
And had some bits of scull uninjured yet,
Promised amendment, vow'd his wife spake reason,
'He would not see another play that season'—
Three stubborn fortnights Jack his promise kept,

Was late and early in his shop, eat, slept,
And walk'd and talk'd, like ordinary men ;
No *wit*, but John the hatter once again—
Visits his club : when lo ! one *fatal night*
His wife with horror view'd the well-known sight—
John's *hat*, *wig*, *snuff-box*—well she knew his tricks—
And Jack decamping at the hour of six ;
Just at the counter's edge a playbill lay,
Announcing that 'Pizarro' was the play—
'O Johnny, Johnny, this is your old doing.'
Quoth Jack, 'Why what the devil storm's a-brewing ?
About a harmless play why all this fright ?
I'll go and see it if it's but for spite—
Zounds, woman ! *Nelson's* to be there to-night.' "

N.B.—This was intended for Jack Bannister to speak ; but the sage managers have chosen Miss *Heard*, except Miss Tidswell, the worst actress ever seen or *heard*. Now I remember I have promised the loan of my play. I will lend it *instantly*, and you shall get it ('pon honour !) by this day week.

I must go and dress for the boxes ! First night ! Finding I have time, I transcribe the rest. Observe, you must read the last first ; it begins thus :—(The names I took from a little outline G. gave me. I have not read the play.)

" Ladies, ye've seen how Guzman's consort died,
Poor victim of a Spaniard brother's pride,
When Spanish honour through the world was blown,
And Spanish beauty for the best was known.
In that romantic, unenlighten'd time,
A *breach of promise* was a sort of crime—
Which of you handsome English ladies here,

But deems the penance bloody and severe?
A whimsical old Saragossa fashion,
That a dead father's dying inclination,
Should *live* to thwart a living daughter's passion:
Unjustly on the sex *we* men exclaim,
Rail at *your* vices,—and commit the same;—
Man is a promise-breaker from the womb,
And goes a promise-breaker to the tomb—
What need we instance here the lover's vow,
The sick man's purpose, or the great man's bow?
The truth by few examples best is shown—
Instead of many which are better known,
Take poor Jack Incident, that's dead and gone.
Jack," etc. etc. etc.

Now you have it all—how do you like it? I am going to hear it recited ! ! ! C. L.

To WILLIAM GODWIN

LETTER LXXXI.] *Late o' Sunday, December* 14, 1800.

Dear Sir—I have performed my office in a slovenly way, but judge for me. I sat down at six o'clock, and never left reading (and I read out to Mary) your play till 10. In this sitting I noted down lines as they occurred, exactly as you will read my rough paper. Do not be frightened at the bulk of my remarks, for they are almost all upon single lines, which, put together, do not amount to a hundred, and many of them merely verbal. I had but one object in view, abridgment for compression sake. I have used a

dogmatical language (which is truly ludicrous when the trivial nature of my remarks is considered) ; and, remember, my office was to hunt out faults. You may fairly abridge one half of them, as a fair deduction for the infirmities of Error and a single reading, which leaves only fifty objections, most of them merely against words, on no short play. Remember, you constituted me Executioner, and a hangman has been seldom seen to be ashamed of his profession before Master Sheriff. We'll talk of the Beauties (of which I am more than ever sure) when we meet.—Yours truly, C. L.

I will barely add, as you are on the very point of printing, that in my opinion neither prologue nor epilogue should accompany the play. It can only serve to remind your readers of its fate. *Both* suppose an audience, and, that jest being gone, must convert into burlesque. Nor would I (but therein custom and decorum must be a law) print the actors' names. Some things must be kept out of sight.

I have done, and I have but a few square inches of paper to fill up. I am emboldened by a little jorum of punch (vastly good) to say that next to *one man*, I am the most hurt at our ill success. The breast of Hecuba, where she did suckle Hector, looked not to be more lovely than Marshal's forehead when it spit forth sweat, at Critic-swords contending. I remember two

honest lines by Marvel (whose poems by the way I am just going to possess).

> "Where every Mower's wholesome heat
> Smells like an Alexander's sweat."

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER LXXXII.] *December* 16, 1800.

We are damn'd !—Not the facetious epilogue itself could save us ; for, as the editor of the *Morning Post* (quick-sighted gentleman !) hath this morning truly observed (I beg pardon if I falsify his *words ;* their profound *sense* I am sure I retain ;) both prologue and epilogue were worthy of accompanying such a piece ; and indeed (mark the profundity, Mr. Manning !) were received with proper indignation by such of the audience only as thought either worth attending to. Professor, thy glories wax dim ! Again, the incomparable author of the *True Briton* declareth in *his* paper (bearing same date) that the epilogue was an indifferent attempt at humour and character, and failed in both. I forbear to mention the other papers, because I have not read them. O Professor, how different thy feelings now (*quantum mutatus ab illo professore, qui in agris philosophiæ tantas victorias acquisivisti*), —how different thy proud feelings but one little week ago—thy anticipations of thy nine nights—

those visionary claps, which have soothed thy soul by day and thy dreams by night! Calling in accidentally on the Professor while he was out, I was ushered into the study; and my nose quickly (most sagacious always) pointed me to four tokens lying loose upon thy table, Professor, which indicated thy violent and satanical pride of heart. *Imprimis*, there caught mine eye a list of six persons, thy friends, whom thou didst meditate inviting to a sumptuous dinner on the Thursday, anticipating the profits of thy Saturday's play to answer charges: I was in the honoured file! Next (a stronger evidence of thy violent and almost satanical pride) lay a list of all the morning papers (from the *Morning Chronicle* downwards to the *Porcupine*), with the places of their respective offices, where thou wast meditating to insert, and didst insert, an elaborate sketch of the story of thy play; stones in thy enemy's hand to bruise thee with, and severely wast thou bruised, O Professor! nor do I know what oil to pour into thy wounds. Next (which convinced me to a dead conviction of thy pride, violent and almost satanical pride!) lay a list of books which thy un-tragedy-favoured pocket could never answer; Dodsley's Old Plays, Malone's Shakspeare (still harping upon thy play, thy philosophy abandoned meanwhile to Christians and superstitious minds); nay, I believe (if I can believe my memory) that the ambitious Encyclopædia itself was part of thy meditated

acquisitions; but many a playbook was there. All these visions are *damned;* and thou, Professor, must read Shakspeare in future out of a common edition; and, hark ye! pray read him to a little better purpose. Last and strongest against thee (in colours manifest as the hand upon Belshazzar's wall) lay a volume of poems by C. Lloyd and C. Lamb. Thy heart misgave thee, that thy assistant might possibly not have talent enough to furnish thee an epilogue! Manning, all these things came over my mind; all the gratulations that would have thickened upon him, and even some have glanced aside upon his humble friend; the vanity, and the fame, and the profits (the Professor is £500 ideal money out of pocket by this failure, besides £200 he would have got for the copyright, and the Professor is never much beforehand with the world; what he gets is all by the sweat of his brow and dint of brain, for the Professor, though a sure man, is also a slow); and now to muse upon thy altered physiognomy, thy pale and squalid appearance (a kind of *blue sickness* about the eyelids), and thy crest fallen, and thy proud demand of £200 from thy bookseller changed to an uncertainty of his taking it at all, or giving the full £50. The Professor has won my heart by this *his* mournful catastrophe. You remember Marshall, who dined with him at my house; I met him in the lobby immediately after the damnation of the Professor's play, and he looked to me like an angel; his face was

lengthened, and all over perspiration. I never saw such a care-fraught visage; I could have hugged him, I loved him so intensely. "From every pore of him a perfume fell." I have seen that man in many situations, and, from my soul, I think that a more god-like honest soul exists not in this world. The Professor's poor nerves trembling with the recent shock, he hurried him away to my house to supper, and there we comforted him as well as we could. He came to consult me about a change of catastrophe; but alas! the piece was condemned long before that crisis. I at first humoured him with a specious proposition, but have since joined his true friends in advising him to give it up. He did it with a pang, and is to print it as *his*.

L.

LETTER LXXXIII.] *December* 27, 1800.

At length George Dyer's phrenitis has come to a crisis; he is raging and furiously mad. I waited upon the heathen, Thursday was a se'n-night. The first symptom which struck my eye, and gave me incontrovertible proof of the fatal truth, was a pair of nankeen pantaloons four times too big for him, which the said Heathen did pertinaciously affirm to be new.

They were absolutely ingrained with the accumulated dirt of ages; but he affirmed them to be clean. He was going to visit a lady that

was nice about those things, and that's the reason he wore nankeen that day. And then he danced, and capered, and fidgeted, and pulled up his pantaloons, and hugged his intolerable flannel vestment closer about his poetic loins. Anon he gave it loose to the zephyrs which plentifully insinuate their tiny bodies through every crevice, door, window, or wainscot, expressly formed for the exclusion of such impertinents. Then he caught at a proof sheet, and catched up a laundress's bill instead—made a dart at Bloomfield's Poems, and threw them in agony aside. I could not bring him to one direct reply; he could not maintain his jumping mind in a right line for the tithe of a moment by Clifford's Inn clock. He must go to the printer's immediately: (the most unlucky accident!) he had struck off five hundred impressions of his Poems, which were ready for delivery to subscribers, and the Preface must all be expunged. There were eighty pages of Preface, and not till that morning had he discovered that in the very first page of said Preface he had set out with a principle of Criticism fundamentally wrong, which vitiated all his following reasoning. The Preface must be expunged, although it cost him £30, the lowest calculation, taking in paper and printing! In vain have his real friends remonstrated against this Midsummer madness. George is as obstinate as a Primitive Christian, and wards and parries off all our thrusts with one unanswerable fence:—

"Sir, 'tis of great consequence that the *world* is not *misled!*"

As for the other Professor, he has actually begun to dive into Tavernier and Chardin's *Persian* Travels for a story, to form a new drama for the sweet tooth of this fastidious age. Hath not Bethlehem College a fair action for non-residence against such professors? Are poets so *few* in *this age*, that He must write poetry? *Is morals* a subject so exhausted, that he must quit that line? Is the metaphysic well (without a bottom) drained dry?

If I can guess at the wicked pride of the Professor's heart, I would take a shrewd wager that he disdains ever again to dip his pen in *Prose*. Adieu, ye splendid theories! Farewell, dreams of political justice! Law-suits, where I was council for Archbishop Fenelon *versus* my own mother, in the famous fire cause!

Vanish from my mind, professors, one and all! I have metal more attractive on foot.

Man of many snipes,—I will sup with thee (Deo volente, et diabolo nolente,) on Monday night, the 5th of January, in the new year, and crush a cup to the infant century.

A word or two of my progress: Embark at six o'clock in the morning, with a fresh gale, on a Cambridge one-decker; very cold till eight at night; land at St. Mary's lighthouse, muffins and coffee upon table (or any other curious production of Turkey, or both Indies), snipes exactly at

nine, punch to commence at ten, with *argument;* difference of opinion is expected to take place about eleven; perfect unanimity, with some haziness and dimness, before twelve. *N.B.*—My single affection is not so singly wedded to snipes; but the curious and epicurean eye would also take a pleasure in beholding a delicate and well-chosen assortment of teals, ortolans, the unctuous and palate-soothing flesh of geese, wild and tame, nightingales' brains, the sensorium of a young sucking pig, or any other Christmas dish, which I leave to the judgment of you and the cook of Gonville. C. LAMB.

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LETTER LXXXIV.] [No date—end of 1800.]

I send you, in this parcel, my play, which I beg you to present in my name, with my respect and love, to Wordsworth, and his sister. You blame us for giving your direction to Miss Wesley. The woman has been ten times after us about it, and we gave it her at last, under the idea that no further harm would ensue; but she would *once* write to you, and you would bite your lips and forget to answer it, and so it would end. You read us a dismal homily upon "Realities." We know, quite as well as you do, what are shadows and what are realities. You, for in-

stance, when you are over your fourth or fifth jorum, chirping about old school occurrences, are the best of realities. Shadows are cold, thin things, that have no warmth or grasp in them. Miss Wesley and her friend, and a tribe of authoresses that come after you here daily, and, in defect of you, hive and cluster upon us, are the shadows. You encouraged that mopsey, Miss Wesley, to dance after you, in the hope of having her nonsense put into a nonsensical Anthology. We have pretty well shaken her off by that simple expedient of referring her to you; but there are more burs in the wind. I came home t' other day from business, hungry as a hunter, to dinner, with nothing, I am sure, of the author but *hunger* about me; and whom found I closeted with Mary but a friend of this Miss Wesley, one Miss Benjay or Benje; I don't know how she spells her name. I just came in time enough, I believe, luckily to prevent them from exchanging vows of eternal friendship. It seems she is one of your authoresses, that you first foster, and then upbraid us with. But I forgive you. "The rogue has given me potions to make me love him." Well; go she would not, nor step a step over our threshold, till we had promised to come and drink tea with her next night. I had never seen her before, and could not tell who the devil it was that was so familiar. We went, however, not to be impolite. Her lodgings are up two pair of stairs in East Street. Tea and coffee, and

macaroons—a kind of cake I much love. We sat down. Presently Miss Benjay broke the silence, by declaring herself quite of a different opinion from *D'Israeli*, who supposes the differences of human intellect to be the mere effect of organisation. She begged to know my opinion. I attempted to carry it off with a pun upon organ, but that went off very flat. She immediately conceived a very low opinion of my metaphysics; and, turning round to Mary, put some question to her in French,—possibly having heard that neither Mary nor I understood French. The explanation that took place occasioned some embarrassment and much wondering. She then fell into an insulting conversation about the comparative genius and merits of all modern languages, and concluded with asserting that the Saxon was esteemed the purest dialect in Germany. From thence she passed into the subject of poetry; where I, who had hitherto sat mute, and a hearer only, humbly hoped I might now put in a word to some advantage, seeing that it was my own trade in a manner. But I was stopped by a round assertion, that no good poetry had appeared since Dr. Johnson's time. It seems the Doctor has suppressed many hopeful geniuses that way, by the severity of his critical strictures in his *Lives of the Poets*. I here ventured to question the fact, and was beginning to appeal to *names*, but I was assured "it was certainly the case." Then we discussed Miss More's book on

education, which I had never read. It seems Dr. Gregory, another of Miss Benjay's friends, has found fault with one of Miss More's metaphors. Miss More has been at some pains to vindicate herself, — in the opinion of Miss Benjay not without success. It seems the Doctor is invariably against the use of broken or mixed metaphor, which he reprobates, against the authority of Shakspeare himself. We next discussed the question, whether Pope was a poet? I find Dr. Gregory is of opinion he was not, though Miss Seward does not at all concur with him in this. We then sat upon the comparative merits of the ten translations of *Pizarro*, and Miss Benjay or Benje advised Mary to take two of them home (she thought it might afford her some pleasure to compare them *verbatim*); which we declined. It being now nine o'clock, wine and macaroons were again served round, and we parted, with a promise to go again next week, and meet the Miss Porters, who, it seems, have heard much of Mr. Coleridge, and wish to meet *us*, because we are *his* friends. I have been preparing for the occasion. I crowd cotton in my ears. I read all the reviews and magazines of the past month against the dreadful meeting, and I hope by these means to cut a tolerable second-rate figure.

Pray let us have no more complaints about shadows. We are in a fair way, *through you*, to surfeit sick upon them.

Our loves and respects to your host and hostess. Our dearest love to Coleridge.

Take no thought about your proof sheets; they shall be done as if Woodfall himself did them. Pray send us word of Mrs. Coleridge and little David Hartley, your little reality.

Farewell, dear Substance. Take no umbrage at anything I have written.

C. LAMB, *Umbra.*

Land of Shadows,
Shadow Month the 16th or 17th, 1800.

Coleridge, I find loose among your papers a copy of *Christabel.* It wants about thirty lines; you will very much oblige me by sending me the beginning as far as that line,—

"And the spring comes slowly up this way";

and the intermediate lines between—

"The lady leaps up suddenly,
The lovely Lady Christabel";

and the lines,—

"She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak."

The trouble to you *will be small*, and the benefit to us *very great.* A pretty antithesis! A figure in speech I much applaud.

Godwin has called upon us. He spent one evening here: was very friendly: kept us up till

midnight, drank punch, and talked about you. He seems above all men mortified at your going away. Suppose you were to write to that good-natured heathen: "Or is he a *shadow?*"

If I do not *write*, impute it to the long postage, of which you have so much cause to complain. I have scribbled over a *queer letter*, as I find by perusal, but it means no mischief.

I am, and will be, yours ever, in sober sadness, C. L.

Write your *German* as plain as sunshine, for that must correct itself. You know I am *homo unius linguæ:* in English—illiterate, a dunce, a ninny.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER LXXXV.] *January* 30, 1801.

I ought before this to have replied to your very kind invitation into Cumberland. With you and your sister I could gang anywhere; but I am afraid whether I shall ever be able to afford so desperate a journey. Separate from the pleasure of your company, I don't much care if I never see a mountain in my life. I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead Nature.

The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street; the innumerable trades, tradesmen, and customers, coaches, waggons, playhouses; all the bustle and wickedness round about Covent Garden; the very women of the Town; the watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles; life awake, if you awake, at all hours of the night; the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street; the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print-shops, the old bookstalls, parsons cheapening books, coffee-houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the pantomimes—London itself a pantomime and a masquerade—all these things work themselves into my mind, and feed me, without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impels me into night-walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much life. All these emotions must be strange to you; so are your rural emotions to me. But consider, what must I have been doing all my life, not to have lent great portions of my heart with usury to such scenes?

My attachments are all local, purely local. I have no passion (or have had none since I was in love, and then it was the spurious engendering of poetry and books) for groves and valleys. The rooms where I was born, the furniture which has been before my eyes all my life, a book-case which has followed me about like a

faithful dog (only exceeding him in knowledge), wherever I have moved, old chairs, old tables, streets, squares, where I have sunned myself, my old school,—these are my mistresses. Have I not enough, without your mountains? I do not envy you. I should pity you, did I not know that the mind will make friends of anything. Your sun, and moon, and skies, and hills, and lakes, affect me no more, or scarcely come to me in more venerable characters, than as a gilded room with tapestry and tapers, where I might live with handsome visible objects. I consider the clouds above me but as a roof beautifully painted, but unable to satisfy the mind: and at last, like the pictures of the apartment of a connoisseur, unable to afford him any longer a pleasure. So fading upon me, from disuse, have been the beauties of Nature, as they have been confinedly called; so ever fresh, and green, and warm are all the inventions of men, and assemblies of men in this great city. I should certainly have laughed with dear Joanna.

Give my kindest love, and my sister's, to D. and yourself; and a kiss from me to little Barbara Lewthwaite. Thank you for liking my play. C. L.

LETTER LXXXVI.] *January* 1801.

Thanks for your letter and present. I had already borrowed your second volume. What

most pleases me is, "The Song of Lucy." *Simon's sickly daughter*, in "The Sexton," made me *cry*. Next to these are the description of these continuous echoes in the story of "Joanna's Laugh," where the mountains and all the scenery absolutely seem alive; and that fine Shakspearian character of the "happy man," in the "Brothers,"

> ———"that creeps about the fields,
> Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
> Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles
> Into his face, until the setting sun
> Write Fool upon his forehead!"

I will mention one more—the delicate and curious feeling in the wish for the "Cumberland Beggar," that he may have about him the melody of birds, although he hear them not. Here the mind knowingly passes a fiction upon herself, first substituting her own feeling for the Beggar's, and in the same breath detecting the fallacy, will not part with the wish. The "Poet's Epitaph" is disfigured, to my taste, by the common satire upon parsons and lawyers in the beginning, and the coarse epithet of "pin-point," in the sixth stanza. All the rest is eminently good, and your own. I will just add that it appears to me a fault in the "Beggar," that the instructions conveyed in it are too direct, and like a lecture: they don't slide into the mind of the reader while he is imagining no such matter. An intelligent reader finds a sort of insult in

being told, "I will teach you how to think upon this subject." This fault, if I am right, is in a ten-thousandth worse degree to be found in Sterne, and in many novelists and modern poets, who continually put a sign-post up to show where you are to feel. They set out with assuming their readers to be stupid; very different from *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *Roderick Random*, and other beautiful, bare narratives. There is implied an unwritten compact between author and reader; "I will tell you a story, and I suppose you will understand it." Modern novels, *St. Leons* and the like, are full of such flowers as these—"Let not my reader suppose," "Imagine, if you can, modest!" etc. I will here have done with praise and blame. I have written so much, only that you may not think I have passed over your book without observation. . . . I am sorry that Coleridge has christened his *Ancient Marinere*, a *Poet's Reverie;* it is as bad as Bottom the Weaver's declaration that he is not a lion, but only the scenical representation of a lion. What new idea is gained by this title but one subversive of all credit—which the tale should force upon us—of its truth!

For me, I was never so affected with any human tale. After first reading it, I was totally possessed with it for many days. I dislike all the miraculous part of it; but the feelings of the man under the operation of such scenery,

dragged me along like Tom Pipe's magic whistle. I totally differ from your idea that the *Mariner* should have had a character and profession. This is a beauty in *Gulliver's Travels*, where the mind is kept in a placid state of little wonderments; but the *Ancient Marinere* undergoes such trials as overwhelm and bury all individuality or memory of what he was—like the state of a man in a bad dream, one terrible peculiarity of which is, that all consciousness of personality is gone. Your other observation is, I think as well, a little unfounded: the "Marinere," from being conversant in supernatural events, *has* acquired a supernatural and strange cast of phrase, eye, appearance, etc., which frighten the "wedding guest." You will excuse my remarks, because I am hurt and vexed that you should think it necessary, with a prose apology, to open the eyes of dead men that cannot see.

To sum up a general opinion of the second volume, I do not feel any one poem in it so forcibly as the *Ancient Marinere*, and the "Mad Mother," and the "Lines at Tintern Abbey" in the first.

To ROBERT LLOYD

LETTER LXXXVII.] *February* 7, 1801.

Dear Robert—I shall expect you to bring me a brimful account of the pleasure which

Walton has given you, when you come to town. It must square with your mind. The delightful innocence and healthfulness of the Angler's mind will have blown upon yours like a Zephyr. Don't you already feel your spirit *filled* with the scenes?—the banks of rivers—the cowslip beds—the pastoral scenes—the neat alehouses—and hostesses and milkmaids, as far exceeding Virgil and Pope, as the *Holy Living* is beyond Thomas à Kempis. Are not the eating and drinking joys painted to the Life? Do they not inspire you with an immortal hunger? Are not you ambitious of being made an Angler? What edition have you got? is it Hawkins's, with plates of Piscator, etc.? That sells very dear. I have only been able to purchase the last edition without the old Plates which pleased my childhood; the plates being worn out, and the old Edition difficult and expensive to procure. The *Complete Angler* is the only Treatise written in Dialogues that is worth a halfpenny. Many elegant dialogues have been written (such as Bishop Berkeley's *Minute Philosopher*), but in all of them the Interlocutors are merely abstract arguments personify'd; not living dramatic characters, as in Walton, where *every thing* is *alive;* the fishes are absolutely *charactered;* and birds and animals are as interesting as men and women.

I need not be at much pains to get the

Holy Livings. We can procure them in ten minutes' search at any stall or shop in London. By your engaging one for Priscilla, it should seem *she* will be in Town—is that the case? I thought she was fix'd at the Lakes.

I perfectly understand the nature of your solitariness at Birm., and wish I could divide myself, "like a bribed haunch" between London and it. But courage! you will soon be emancipated, and (it may be) have a frequent power of visiting this great place. Let them talk of lakes and mountains and romantic dales—all that fantastic stuff; give me a ramble by night, in the winter nights in London—the Lamps lit —the pavements of the motley Strand crowded with to and fro passengers—the shops all brilliant, and stuffed with obliging customers and obliged tradesmen—give me the old book-stalls of London—a walk in the bright Piazzas of Covent Garden. I defy a man to be dull in such places—perfect Mahometan paradises upon earth! I have lent out my heart with usury to such scenes from my childhood up, and have cried with fulness of joy at the multitudinous scenes of Life in the crowded streets of ever dear London. I wish you could fix here. I don't know if you quite comprehend my low Urban Taste; but depend upon it that a man of any feeling will have given his heart and his love in childhood and in boyhood to any scenes where he has been bred, as well to dirty streets

(and smoky walls as they are called) as to green lanes, "where live nibbling sheep," and to the everlasting hills and the Lakes and ocean. A mob of men is better than a flock of sheep, and a crowd of happy faces justling into the playhouse at the hour of six is a more beautiful spectacle to man than the shepherd driving his "silly" sheep to fold. Come to London and learn to sympathise with my unrural notions.

Wordsworth has published a second vol.—*Lyrical Ballads.* Most of them very good, but not so good as first vol. What more can I tell you? I believe I told you I have been to see Manning. He is a dainty chiel.—A man of great Power—an enchanter almost.—Far beyond Coleridge or any man in power of impressing—when he gets you alone, he can act the wonders of Egypt. Only he is lazy, and does not always put forth all his strength; if he did, I know no man of genius at all comparable to him.

Yours as ever, C. L.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER LXXXVIII.] *February* 15, 1801.

I had need be cautious henceforward what opinion I give of the *Lyrical Ballads.* All the North of England are in a turmoil. Cumber-

land and Westmoreland have already declared a state of war. I lately received from Wordsworth a copy of the second volume, accompanied by an acknowledgment of having received from me many months since a copy of a certain Tragedy, with excuses for not having made any acknowledgment sooner, it being owing to an "almost insurmountable aversion from Letter-writing." This letter I answered in due form and time, and enumerated several of the passages which had most affected me, adding, unfortunately, that no single piece had moved me so forcibly as the "Ancient Mariner," "The Mad Mother," or the "Lines at Tintern Abbey." The Post did not sleep a moment. I received almost instantaneously a long letter of four sweating pages from my Reluctant Letter-Writer, the purport of which was, that he was sorry his 2nd vol. had not given me more pleasure (Devil a hint did I give that it had *not pleased me*), and "was compelled to wish that my range of sensibility was more extended, being obliged to believe that I should receive large influxes of happiness and happy Thoughts" (I suppose from the L. B.)—with a deal of stuff about a certain Union of Tenderness and Imagination, which in the sense he used Imagination was not the characteristic of Shakspeare, but which Milton possessed in a degree far exceeding other Poets: which Union, as the highest species of Poetry, and chiefly deserving that name, "He was most proud to

aspire to" ; then illustrating the said Union by two quotations from his own 2nd vol. (which I had been so unfortunate as to miss). 1st Specimen—a father addresses his son :—

> "When thou
> First camest into the World, as it befalls
> To new-born Infants, thou didst sleep away
> Two days : and *Blessings from thy father's Tongue*
> *Then fell upon thee.*"

The lines were thus undermarked, and then followed " This Passage, as combining in an extraordinary degree that Union of Imagination and Tenderness which I am speaking of, I consider as one of the Best I ever wrote ! "

2nd Specimen.—A youth, after years of absence, revisits his native place, and thinks (as most people do) that there has been strange alteration in his absence :—

> " And that the rocks
> And everlasting Hills themselves were changed."

You see both these are good Poetry : but after one has been reading Shakspeare twenty of the best years of one's life, to have a fellow start up, and prate about some unknown quality which Shakspeare possessed in a degree inferior to Milton and *somebody else ! !* This was not to be *all* my castigation. Coleridge, who had not written to me some months before, starts up from his bed of sickness to reprove me for my hardy presumption : four long pages, equally sweaty and

more tedious, came from him; assuring me that, when the works of a man of true genius such as W. undoubtedly was, do not please me at first sight, I should suspect the fault to lie "in me and not in them," etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. What am I to do with such people? I certainly shall write them a very merry Letter. Writing to *you*, I may say that the 2nd vol. has no such pieces as the three I enumerated. It is full of original thinking and an observing mind, but it does not often make you laugh or cry.—It too artfully aims at simplicity of expression. And you sometimes doubt if Simplicity be not a cover for Poverty. The best Piece in it I will send you, being *short*. I have grievously offended my friends in the North by declaring my undue preference; but I need not fear you :—

"She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the Springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were few (*sic*) to praise
And very few to love.

A violet, by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye.
Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown; and few could know,
When Lucy ceased to be.
But she is in the grave, and oh!
The difference to me."

This is choice and genuine, and so are many,

many more. But one does not like to have 'em rammed down one's throat. "Pray, take it—it's very good—let me help you—eat faster."

At length George Dyer's first vol. is come to a birth. One volume of three—Subscribers being *allowed* by the Prospectus to pay for all at once (tho' it's very doubtful if the rest ever come to anything, this having been already some years getting out). I paid two guineas for you and myself, which entitle us to the whole. I will send you your copy, if you are in a *great hurry*. Meantime you owe me a guinea. George skipped about like a scorched pea at the receipt of so much cash. To give you a specimen of the beautiful absurdity of the Notes, which defy imitation, take one: "Discrimination is not the *aim* of the present volume. It will be more strictly attended to in the next." One of the sonnets purports to have been written in Bedlam! This for a man to own! The rest are addressed to Science, Genius, Melancholy—etc. etc.—two, to the River Cam—an Ode to the Nightingale. Another to Howard, beginning "Spirit of meek Philanthropy!" One is entitled *The Madman*—"being collected by the author from several Madhouses." It begins "Yes, yes—'tis He!" A long poetical satire is addressed to "John Disney, D.D.—his wife and daughter!!!"

Now to my own affairs. I have not taken that thing to Colman, but I have proceeded one step in the business. I have inquired his address,

and am promised it in a few days. Meantime three acts and a half are finished galloping, of a Play on a Persian Story which I must father in April. But far, very far, from *Antonio* in composition. O Jephtha, Judge of Israel, what a fool I was! C. LAMB.

LETTER LXXXIX.] [*February* or *March*] 1801.

You masters of logic ought to know (logic is nothing more than a knowledge of *words*, as the Greek etymon implies) that all words are no more to be taken in a literal sense at all times than a promise given to a tailor. When I exprest an apprehension that you were mortally offended, I meant no more than by the application of a certain formula of efficacious sounds, which had *done* in similar cases before, to rouse a sense of decency in you, and a remembrance of what was due to me! You masters of logic should advert to this phenomenon in human speech, before you arraign the usage of us dramatic geniuses. Imagination is a good blood mare, and goes well: but the misfortune is, she has too many paths before her. 'Tis true I might have imagined to myself that you had trundled your frail carcass to Norfolk. I might also, and did imagine, that you had not, but that you were lazy, or inventing new properties in a triangle, and for that purpose moulding and squeezing Landlord Crisp's three-

cornered beaver into fantastic experimental forms; or, that Archimedes was meditating to repulse the French, in case of a Cambridge invasion, by a geometric hurling of folios on their red caps; or, peradventure, that you were in extremities, in great wants, and just set out for Trinity Bogs when my letters came. In short, my genius (which is a short word, nowadays, for what-a-great-man-am-I)! was absolutely stifled and overlaid with its own riches. Truth is one and poor, like the cruse of Elijah's widow. Imagination is the bold face that multiplies its oil; and thou, the old cracked pipkin, that could not believe it could be put to such purposes. Dull pipkin, to have Elijah for thy cook! Imbecile recipient of so fat a miracle! I send you George Dyer's Poems, the richest production of the lyrical muse *this century* can justly boast: for Wordsworth's L. B. were published, or at least written, before Christmas.

Please to advert to pages 291 to 296 for the most astonishing account of where Shakspeare's muse has been all this while. I thought she had been dead, and buried in Stratford Church, with the young man *that kept her company*,—

> "But it seems, like the Devil,
> Buried in Cole Harbour,
> Some say she's risen again,
> 'Gone prentice to a barber."

N.B.—I don't charge anything for the

additional manuscript notes, which are the joint productions of myself and a learned translator of Schiller, John Stoddart, Esq.

N.B. the 2nd.—I should not have blotted your book, but I had sent my own out to be bound, as I was in duty bound. A liberal criticism upon the several pieces, lyrical, heroical, amatory, and satirical, would be acceptable. So, you don't think there's a Word's—worth of good poetry in the great L. B.! I daren't put the dreaded syllables at their just length, for my back tingles from the northern castigation. I send you the three letters, which I beg you to return along with those former letters (which I hope you are not going to print, by your detention). But don't be in a hurry to send them. When you come to town will do. Apropos of coming to town: Last Sunday was a fortnight, as I was *coming to town* from the Professor's inspired with new rum, I tumbled down and broke my nose. I drink nothing stronger than malt liquors.

I am going to change my lodgings, having received a hint that it would be agreeable, at our Lady's next feast. I have partly fixed upon most delectable rooms, which look out (when you stand a tip-toe) over the Thames and Surrey Hills; at the upper end of King's Bench Walks, in the Temple. There I shall have all the privacy of a house without the encumbrance, and shall be able to lock my friends out as often

as I desire to hold free converse with my immortal mind; for my present lodgings resemble a minister's levee, I have so increased my acquaintance (as they call 'em) since I have resided in town. Like the country mouse, that had tasted a little of urbane manners, I long to be nibbling my own cheese by my dear self, without mouse-traps and time-traps. By my new plan, I shall be as airy, up four pair of stairs, as in the country; and in a garden, in the midst of enchanting (more than Mahometan paradise) London, whose dirtiest drab-frequented alley, and her lowest bowing tradesman, I would not exchange for Skiddaw, Helvellyn, James, Walter, and the parson into the bargain. O her lamps of a night! her rich goldsmiths, print-shops, toy-shops, mercers, hardwaremen, pastry-cooks, St. Paul's Churchyard, the Strand, Exeter Change, Charing Cross, with the man *upon* a black horse! These are thy gods, O London! A'nt you mightily moped on the banks of the Cam? Had you not better come and set up here? You can't think what a difference. All the streets and pavements are pure gold, I warrant you. At least, I know an alchemy that turns her mud into that metal,—a mind that loves to be at home in crowds.

'Tis half-past twelve o'clock, and all sober people ought to be a-bed. Between you and me the L. Ballads are but drowsy performances.

C. LAMB (as you may guess).

To ROBERT LLOYD

LETTER XC.] *April* 6, 1801.

Fletcher's *Purple Island* is a tedious Allegory of the Parts of the Human body. I would not advise you to lay out six *pence* upon it. It is not the work of Fletcher, the Coadjutor of Beaumont, but one Phineas, a kinsman of his.

If by the work of Bishop Taylor, whose Title you have not given correctly, you mean his CONTEMPLATIONS on the State of Man in this Life and that which is to come, I dare hope you will join with me in believing it to be spurious. The suspicious circumstance of its being a posthumous work, with the total dissimilarity in style to the genuine works, I think evince that it never was the work of DOCTOR JEREMY TAYLOR, Late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland, and Administrator of the See of Dromore; such are the titles which his sounding title-pages give him, and I love the man, and I love his paraphernalia, and I like to name him with all his attributions and additions. If you are yet but lightly acquainted with his real manner, take up and read the whole first chapter of the Holy DYING; in particular turn to the first paragraph of the second section of that chapter for a simile of a rose, or more truly many similes within simile; for such were the riches of his fancy, that when

a beauteous image offered, before he could stay to expand it into all its capacities, throngs of new coming images came up, and justled out the first, or blended in disorder with it, which imitates the order of every rapid mind. But read all the first chapter by my advice; and I know I need not advise you, when you have read it, to read the second.

Or for another specimen (where so many beauties crowd, the judgment has yet vanity enough to think it can discern a handsomest, till a second judgment and a third *ad infinitum* start up to disallow their elder brother's pretensions) turn to the Story of the Ephesian Matron in the second section of the 5th chapter of the same Holy DYING (I still refer to the *Dying* part, because it contains better matter than the "Holy Living," which deals more in rules than illustrations—I mean in comparison with the other only, else it has more and more beautiful illustrations—than any prose book besides)—read it yourself and show it to Plumstead (with my LOVE, and bid him write to me), and ask him if WILLY himself has ever told a story with more circumstances of FANCY and HUMOUR.

The paragraph begins, "But that which is to be faulted," and the story not long after follows. Make these references while P. is with you, that you may stir him up to the Love of Jeremy Taylor, and make a convertite

of him. Coleridge was the man who first solemnly exhorted me to "study" the works of Dr. Jeremy Taylor, and I have had reason to bless the hour in which he did it. Read as many of his works as you can get. I will assist you in getting them when we go a stall hunting together in London, and it's odds if we don't get a good Beaumt. and Fletcher cheap.

Bp. Taylor has more and more beautiful imagery, and (what is more to a Lover of Willy) more knowledge and description of human life and manners than any prose book in the language: he has more delicacy and sweetness than any mortal, the "gentle" Shakspeare hardly excepted,—his similes and allusions are taken, as the bees take honey, from all the youngest, greenest, exquisitest parts of nature, from plants, and flowers, and fruit, young boys and virgins, from little children perpetually, from sucking infants, babies' smiles, roses, gardens,—his imagination was a spacious Garden, where no vile insects could crawl in; his apprehension a "COURT" where no foul thoughts kept "leets and holydays."

> "Snail and worm give no offence,
> Newt nor blind worm be not seen,
> Come not near our fairy queen."

You must read Bishop Taylor with allowances for the subjects on which he wrote, and the

age *in* which. You may skip or patiently endure his tedious discourses on rites and ceremonies, Baptism, and the Eucharist, the Clerical function, and the antiquity of Episcopacy, a good deal of which are inserted in works not purely controversial; his polemical works you may skip altogether, unless you have a taste for the exertions of vigorous reason and subtle distinguishing on uninteresting topics. Such of his works as you should begin with, to get a taste for him (after which your Love will lead you to his Polemical and drier works, as Love led Leander "over boots" knee-deep thro' the Hellespont), but read first the *Holy Living and Dying*, and his *Life of Christ* and *Sermons*, both in folio. And, above all, try to get a beautiful little tract on the "Measures and offices of Friendship," printed with his *opuscula* duodecimo, and also at the end of his Polemical Discourses in folio. Another thing you will observe in Bp. Taylor, without which consideration you will do him injustice. He wrote to different classes of people. His *Holy Living and Dying* and *Life of Christ* were designed and have been used as popular books of family Devotion, and have been thumbed by old women, and laid about in the window seats of old houses in great families, like the Bible, and the "Queene-like-Closet or rare boke of Recipes in medicine and cookery, fitted to all capacities."

Accordingly in these *the fancy* is perpetually applied to; any slight conceit, allusion, or analogy, any "prettiness," a story true or false, serves for an argument adapted to women and young persons, and "incompetent judgments"; whereas the *Liberty of Prophecy* (a book in your father's bookcase) is a series of severe and masterly reasoning, fitted to great Clerks and learned Fathers, with no more of Fancy than is subordinate and ornamental.—Such various powers had the Bishop of Down and Connor, Administrator of the See of Dromore!

My theme and my story!—Farewell,

C. LAMB.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER XCI.] *April* 1801.

I was not aware that you owed me anything beside that guinea; but I daresay you are right. I live at No. 16 Mitre Court Buildings, a pistol-shot off Baron Maseres'. You must introduce me to the Baron. I think we should suit one another mainly. He lives on the ground floor, for convenience of the gout; I prefer the attic story, for the air. He keeps three footmen and two maids; I have neither maid nor laundress, not caring to be troubled with them. His forte, I understand, is the

higher mathematics ; my turn, I confess, is more to poetry and the belles lettres. The very antithesis of our characters would make up a harmony. You must bring the Baron and me together. *N.B.*—When you come to see me, mount up to the top of the stairs—I hope you are not asthmatical—and come in flannel, for 'tis pure airy up there. And bring your glass, and I will show you the Surrey Hills. My bed faces the river, so as by perking up upon my haunches, and supporting my carcass with my elbows, without much wrying my neck, I can see the white sails glide by the bottom of the King's Bench Walks as I lie in my bed. An excellent tiptoe prospect in the best room :—casement windows, with small panes, to look more like a cottage. Mind, I have got no bed for you, that's flat ; sold it to pay expenses of moving,—the very bed on which Manning lay ; the friendly, the mathematical Manning ! How forcibly does it remind me of the interesting Otway ! "The very bed which on thy marriage night gave thee into the arms of Belvidera, by the coarse hands of ruffians—" (upholsterers' men), etc. My tears will not give me leave to go on. But a bed I will get you, Manning, on condition you will be my day-guest.

I have been ill more than a month, with a bad cold, which comes upon me (like a murderer's conscience) about midnight, and vexes me for many hours. I have successively been drugged

with Spanish licorice, opium, ipecacuanha, paregoric, and tincture of foxglove (tinctura purpuræ digitalis of the ancients). I am afraid I must leave off drinking.

To ROBERT LLOYD

LETTER XCII.] *April* 1801.

I am not dead nor asleep. But Manning is in town, and Coleridge is in town, and I am making a thorough alteration in the structure of my play for Publication. My brain is overwrought with variety of worldly-intercourse. I have neither time nor mind for scribbling. Who shall deliver me from the body of this Death?

Only continue to write and to believe that when the Hour comes I shall strike like Jack of the Clock, *id est*, I shall once more become a regular correspondent of Robert and Plumstead. How is the benevolent, loud-talking, Shakspeare-loving Brewer?

To your inquiry respecting a selection from Bp. Taylor I answer—it cannot be done, and if it could, it would not *take* with John Bull. It cannot be done, for who can disentangle and unthread the rich texture of Nature and Poetry, sewn so thick into a stout coat of theology, without spoiling both *lace* and *coat?* How

beggarly and how bald do even Shakspeare's Princely Pieces look when thus violently divorced from *connection* and *circumstance!* When we meet with "To be or not to be," or Jacques' moralisings upon the Deer, or Brutus and Cassius' quarrel and reconciliation—in an Enfield Speaker, or in Elegant Extracts,—how we stare, and will scarcely acknowledge to ourselves (what we are conscious we feel) that they are flat and have no power. Something exactly like this have I experienced when I have picked out similes and stars from "Holy Dying" and shown them *per se*, as you'd show specimens of minerals or pieces of rock. Compare the grand effect of the Star-paved firmament, and imagine a boy capable of picking out those pretty twinklers one by one and playing at chuck-farthing with them. Everything in heaven and earth, in man and in story, in books and in fancy, acts by Confederacy, by juxtaposition, by circumstance and place. Consider a fine family (if I were not writing to you I might instance your own) of sons and daughters, with a respectable father and a handsome mother at their heads, all met in one house, and happy round one table. Earth cannot show a more lovely and venerable sight, such as the Angels in heaven might lament that in their country there is no marrying or giving in marriage. Take and split this Body into individuals—show the separate caprices, vagaries, etc., of Charles, Rob, or Plum, one

a Quaker, another a Churchman. The eldest daughter seeking a husband out of the pale of parental faith—another warping, perhaps—the father a prudent, circumspective, do-me-good sort of a man *blest* with children whom no ordinary rules can circumscribe. I have not room for all particulars—but just as this happy and venerable Body of a family loses by splitting and considering individuals too nicely, so it is when we pick out Best Bits out of a great writer. 'Tis the *sum* total of his mind which affects us.

C. L.

To WILLIAM GODWIN

LETTER XCIII.] *June* 29, 1801.

Dear Sir—Dr. Christy's Brother and Sister are come to town and have shown me great civilities. I in return wish to requite them, having, *by God's grace*, principles of generosity *implanted* (as the moralists say) in my nature, which have been duly cultivated and watered by good and religious friends, and a pious education. They have picked up in the northern parts of the island an astonishing admiration of the great author of the New Philosophy in England, and I have ventured to promise their taste an evening's gratification by seeing Mr. Godwin *face* to *face* ! ! ! ! ! Will you do them, and me *in* them, the pleasure of drinking tea and supping

with me at the *old* number 16 on Friday or Saturday next? An early nomination of the day will very much oblige yours sincerely,

CH. LAMB.

To ROBERT LLOYD

LETTER XCIV.] *July* 26, 1801.

Cooke in "Richard the Third" is a perfect caricature. He gives you the *monster* Richard, but not the *man* Richard. Shakspeare's bloody character impresses you with awe and deep admiration of his witty parts, his consummate hypocrisy, and indefatigable prosecution of purpose. You despise, detest, and loathe the cunning, vulgar, low and fierce Richard, which Cooke substitutes in his place. He gives you no other idea than of a vulgar villain, rejoicing in his being able to overreach, and not possessing that joy in *silent* consciousness, but betraying it, like a *poor* villain, in sneers and distortions of the face, like a droll at a country fair: not to add that cunning so self-betraying and manner so vulgar could never have deceived the politic Buckingham nor the soft Lady Anne: *both* bred in courts, would have turned with disgust from such a fellow. Not but Cooke has *powers;* but not of discrimination. His manner is strong, coarse, and vigorous, and well adapted to some characters. But the lofty imagery and high

sentiments and high passions of *Poetry* come black and prose-smoked from his prose Lips. I have not seen him in Overreach, but from what I remember of the character, I think he could not have chosen one more fit. I thought the play a highly finished one when I read it some time back. I *remember* a most noble image. Sir Giles, drawing his sword in the last scene, says :

> "Some undone widow sits upon mine arm,
> And takes away the use on't."

This is horribly fine, and I am not sure that it did not suggest to me my conclusion of "Pride's Cure" ; but my imitation is miserably inferior :

> This arm was busy in the day of Naseby :
> 'Tis paralytic now, and knows no use of weapons.

Pierre and Jaffier are the best things in Otway. Belvidera is a poor Creature, and has had more than her due fame. Monimia is a little better, but she *whines*. I like Calista in the "Fair Penitent" better than either of Otway's women. Lee's "Massacre of Paris" is a noble play, very chastely and finely written. His Alexander is full of that madness "which rightly should possess a poet's brain." "Œdipus" is also a fine play, but less so than these two. It is a joint production of Lee and Dryden. "All For Love" begins with uncommon Spirit, but soon flags,

and is of no worth upon the whole. The last scene of "Young's Revenge" is sublime: the rest of it not worth 1d.

I want to have your opinion and Plumstead's on Cooke's "Richard the Third." I am possessed with an admiration of the genuine Richard, his genius, and his mounting spirit, which no consideration of his cruelties can depress. Shakspeare has not made Richard so black a Monster as is supposed. Wherever he is monstrous, it was to conform to vulgar opinion. But he is generally a Man. Read his most exquisite address to the Widowed Queen to court her daughter for him—the topics of maternal feeling, of a deep knowledge of the heart, are such as no monster could have supplied. Richard must have *felt* before he could feign so well; tho' ambition choked the good seed. I think it the most finished piece of Eloquence in the world; of *persuasive* oratory far above Demosthenes, Burke, or any man, far exceeding the courtship of Lady Anne. *Her* relenting is barely natural, after all; the more perhaps S.'s merit to make *impossible* appear *probable*, but the *Queen's consent* (taking in all the circumstances and topics, *private* and *public*, with his angelic address, able to draw the host of [piece cut out of letter] Lucifer) is *probable;* and [piece cut out of letter] resisted it. This observation applies to many other parts. All the inconsistency is, that Shakspeare's better genius was forced to

struggle against the prejudices which made a monster of Richard. He set out to paint a *monster*, but his human sympathies produced a *man*.

Are you not tired with all this *ingenious* criticism? I am.

Richard itself is totally metamorphosed in the wretched *acting play* of that name, which you will see, altered by *Cibber*.

God bless you, C. LAMB.

To MR. WALTER WILSON

LETTER XCV.] *August* 14, 1801.

Dear Wilson—I am extremely sorry that any serious differences should subsist between us, on account of some foolish behaviour of mine at Richmond; you knew me well enough before, that a very little liquor will cause a considerable alteration in me.

I beg you to impute my conduct solely to that, and not to any deliberate intention of offending you, from whom I have received so many friendly attentions. I know that you think a very important difference in opinion with respect to some more serious subjects between us makes me a dangerous companion; but do not rashly infer, from some slight and light expressions which I may have made use

of in a moment of levity, in your presence, without sufficient regard to your feelings—do not conclude that I am an inveterate enemy to all religion. I have had a time of seriousness, and I have known the importance and reality of a religious belief. Latterly, I acknowledge, much of my seriousness has gone off, whether from new company, or some other new associations; but I still retain at bottom a conviction of the truth, and a certainty of the usefulness of religion. I will not pretend to more gravity or feeling than I at present possess; my intention is not to persuade you that any great alteration is probable in me; sudden converts are superficial and transitory; I only want you to believe that I have *stamina* of seriousness within me, and that I desire nothing more than a return of that friendly intercourse which used to subsist between us, but which my folly has suspended.

Believe me, very affectionately yours,

C. LAMB.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER XCVI.] [*August*] 1801.

Dear Manning—I have forborne writing so long (and so have you for the matter of that), until I am almost ashamed either to write or to

forbear any longer. But as your silence may proceed from some worse cause than neglect —from illness, or some mishap which may have befallen you, I begin to be anxious. You may have been burnt out, or you may have married, or you may have broken a limb, or turned country parson: any of these would be excuse sufficient for not coming to my supper. I am not so unforgiving as the nobleman in Saint Mark. For me, nothing new has happened to me, unless that the poor *Albion* died last Saturday of the world's neglect, and with it the fountain of my puns is choked up for ever.

All the Lloyds wonder that you do not write to them. They apply to me for the cause. Relieve me from this weight of ignorance, and enable me to give a truly oracular response.

I have been confined some days with swelled cheek and rheumatism: they divide and govern me with a viceroy-headache in the middle. I can neither write nor read without great pain. It must be something like obstinacy that I choose this time to write to you in after many months' interruption.

I will close my letter of simple inquiry with an epigram on Mackintosh, the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* man—who has got a place at last—one of the last I *did* for the Albion :—

Though thou'rt like Judas, an apostate black,
In the resemblance one thing thou dost lack:

When he had gotten his ill-purchased pelf,
He went away, and wisely hang'd himself:
This thou may'st do at last; yet much I doubt,
If thou hast any *bowels* to gush out!

Yours, as ever, C. LAMB.

LETTER XCVII.] *August* 31, 1801.

I heard that you were going to China, with a commission from the Wedgwoods to collect hints for their pottery, and to teach the Chinese *perspective;* but I did not know that London lay in your way to Pekin. I am seriously glad of it, for I shall trouble you with a small present for the Emperor of Usbeck Tartary, as you go by his territories: it is a fragment of a "Dissertation on the state of political parties in England at the end of the eighteenth century," which will no doubt be very interesting to his Imperial Majesty. It was written originally in English for the use of the *two* and *twenty* readers of the *Albion* (this *calculation* includes a printer, four pressmen, and a devil); but becoming of no use when the *Albion* stopped, I got it translated into Usbeck Tartar by my good friend Tibet Kulm, who is to come to London with a *civil* invitation from the Cham to the English nation to go over to the worship of the Lama.

The *Albion* is dead—dead as nail in door—and my revenues have died with it; but I am not as a man without hope. I have got a sort

of opening to the *Morning Chronicle*, by means of that common dispenser of benevolence, Mister Dyer. I have not seen Perry, the editor, yet: but I am preparing a specimen. I shall have a difficult job to manage, for you must know that Mr. Perry, in common with the great body of the Whigs, thinks the *Albion* very low. I find I must rise a peg or so, be a little more decent, and less abusive; for, to confess the truth, I had arrived to an abominable pitch; I spared neither age nor sex when my cue was given me. *N'importe* (as they say in French), any climate will suit me. So you are about to bring your old face-making face to London. You could not come in a better time for my purposes; for I have just lost Rickman, a faint idea of whose character I sent you. He has gone to Ireland for a year or two to make his fortune; and I have lost by his going what seems to me I can never recover—*a finished man.* His memory will be to me as the brazen serpent to the Israelites,—I shall look up to it, to keep me upright and honest. But he may yet bring back his honest face to England one day. I wish your affairs with the Emperor of China had not been *so urgent*, that you might have stayed in Great Britain a year or two longer, to have seen him; for, judging from *my own* experience, I almost dare pronounce you never saw his equal. I never saw a man that could be at all a second or substitute for him in any sort.

Imagine that what is here erased was an apology and explanation, perfectly satisfactory you may be sure for rating this man so highly at the expense of ——, and ——, and ——, and M——, and ——, and ——, and ——. But Mr. Burke has explained this phenomenon of our nature very prettily in his letter to a Member of the National Assembly, or else in Appeal to the old Whigs, I forget which. Do you remember an instance from Homer (who understood these matters tolerably well), of Priam driving away his other sons with expressions of wrath and bitter reproach, when Hector was just dead ?

I live where I did, in a *private* manner, because I don't like *state*. Nothing is so disagreeable to me as the clamours and applauses of the mob. For this reason I live in an *obscure* situation in one of the courts of the Temple.

C. L.

I send you all of Coleridge's letters to me, which I have preserved : some of them are upon the subject of my play. I also send you Kemble's two letters, and the prompter's courteous epistle, with a curious critique on " Pride's Cure," by a young physician from EDINBRO', who modestly suggests quite another kind of a plot. These are monuments of my disappointment which I like to preserve.

In Coleridge's letters you will find a good

deal of amusement, to see genuine talent struggling against a pompous display of it. I also send you the Professor's letter to me (careful Professor ! to conceal his *name* even from his correspondent), ere yet the Professor's pride was cured. Oh monstrous and almost satanical pride !

You will carefully keep all (except the Scotch Doctor's, *which burn*) *in statu quo*, till I come to claim mine own. C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM GODWIN

LETTER XCVIII.] [*Margate ?*] *September* 9, 1801.

Dear Sir—Nothing runs in my head when I think of your story, but that you should make it as like the life of Savage as possible. That is a known and familiar tale, and its effect on the public mind has been very great. Many of the incidents in the true history are readily made dramatical. For instance, Savage used to walk backwards and forwards o' nights to his mother's window, to catch a glimpse of her, as she passed with a candle. With some such situation the play might happily open. I would plunge my Hero, exactly like Savage, into difficulties and embarrassments, the consequences of an unsettled mind : out of which he may be extricated by the unknown interference of his mother. He should be attended from the beginning by a Friend, who

should stand in much the same relation towards him as Horatio to Altamont in the play of the "Fair Penitent." A character of this sort seems indispensable. This Friend might gain interviews with the mother, when the son was refused sight of her. Like Horatio with Calista, he might wring her soul. Like Horatio, he might learn the secret *first*. He might be exactly in the same perplexing situation, when he had learned it, whether to tell it or conceal it from the Son (I have still Savage in my head), who might *kill* a man (as he did) in an affray—he should receive a pardon, as Savage did—and the mother might interfere to have him *banished*. This should provoke the friend to demand an interview with her husband, and disclose the whole secret. The husband, refusing to believe anything to her dishonour, should fight with him. The husband repents before he dies. The mother explains and confesses everything in his presence. The son is admitted to an interview with his now acknowledged mother. Instead of embraces, she resolves to abstract herself from all pleasure, even from his sight, in voluntary penance all her days after. This is crude indeed ! ! but I am totally unable to suggest a better. I am the worst hand in the world at a plot. But I understand enough of passion to predict that your story, with some of Savage's, which has no repugnance, but a natural alliance with it, cannot fail. The mystery of the suspected relationship—the suspicion, generated

from slight and forgotten circumstances, coming at last to act as Instinct, and so to be mistaken for Instinct—the son's unceasing pursuit and throwing of himself in his mother's way, something like Falkland's eternal persecution of Williams—the high and intricate passion in the mother, the being obliged to shun and keep at a distance the thing nearest to her heart—to be cruel, where her heart yearns to be kind, without a possibility of explanation. You have the power of life and death and the hearts of your auditors in your hands—still Harris will want a skeleton, and he must have it. I can only put in some sorry hints. The discovery to the son's friend may take place not before the third act—in some such way as this. The mother may cross the street—he may point her out to some gay companion of his as the Beauty of Leghorn —the pattern for wives, etc. etc. His companion, who is an Englishman, laughs at his mistake, and knows her to have been the famous Nancy Dawson, or any one else, who captivated the English king. Some such way seems dramatic, and speaks to the Eye. The audience will enter into the Friend's surprise and into the perplexity of his situation. These Ocular Scenes are so many great landmarks, rememberable headlands and lighthouses in the voyage. Macbeth's witch has a good advice to a tragic writer, what to do with his spectator.

"*Show* his *eyes*, and grieve his heart."

The most difficult thing seems to be, What to do with the husband? You will not make him jealous of his own son? that is a stale and an unpleasant trick in Douglas, etc. Can't you keep him out of the way till you want him, as the husband of Isabella is conveniently sent off till his cue comes? There will be story enough without him, and he will only puzzle all. Catastrophes are worst of all. Mine is most stupid. I only propose it to fulfil my engagement, not in hopes to convert you.

It is always difficult to get rid of a woman at the end of a tragedy. *Men* may fight and die. A woman must either take poison, *which is a nasty trick*, or go mad, which is not fit to be shown—or retire, which is poor: only retiring is most reputable.

I am sorry I can furnish you no better: but I find it extremely difficult to settle my thought upon anything but the scene before me, when I am from home: I am from home so seldom. If any the least hint crosses me, I will write again, and I very much wish to read your plan, if you could abridge and send it. In this little scrawl you must take the will for the deed, for I most sincerely wish success to your play.—Farewell,

C. L.

LETTER XCIX.] *Margate, September* 17, 1801.

[*Fragment.*]

I shall be glad to come home and talk these matters over with you. I have read your scheme very attentively. That Arabella has been mistress to King Charles is sufficient to all the purposes of the story. It can only diminish that respect we feel for her to make her turn whore to one of the Lords of his Bedchamber. Her son must not know that she has been a whore: it matters not that she has been whore to a *King:* equally in both cases, it is against decorum and against the delicacy of a son's respect that he should be privy to it. No doubt, many sons might feel a wayward pleasure in the honourable guilt of their mothers; but is it a true feeling? Is it the best sort of feeling? Is it a feeling to be exposed on theatres to mothers and daughters? Your conclusion (or rather Defoe's) comes far short of the tragic ending, which is always expected; and it is not safe to disappoint. A tragic auditory wants *blood.* They care but little about a man and his wife parting. Besides, what will you do with the son, after all his pursuits and adventures? Even quietly leave him to take guinea-and-a-half lodgings with mamma in Leghorn! O impotent and pacific measures! . . . I am certain that you must mix up some strong ingredients of distress to give a savour to your

pottage. I still think that you may, and must, graft the story of Savage upon Defoe. Your hero must *kill* a *man* or *do something*. Can't you bring him to the gallows or some great mischief, out of which she *must* have recourse to an explanation with her husband to save him. Think on this. The husband, for instance, has great friends in Court at Leghorn. The son is condemned to death. She cannot tease him for a stranger. She must tell the whole truth. Or she *may* tease him, as for a stranger, till (like Othello in Cassio's case) he begins to suspect her for her importunity. Or, being pardoned, can she not tease her husband to get him banished? Something of this I suggested before. *Both* is best. The murder and the pardon will make business for the fourth act, and the banishment and explanation (by means of the *Friend* I want you to draw) the fifth. You must not open any of the truth to Dawley by means of a letter. A letter is a feeble messenger on the stage. Somebody, the son or his friend, must, as a *coup de main*, be exasperated, and obliged to tell the husband. Damn the husband and his "gentlemanlike qualities." Keep him out of sight, or he will trouble all. Let him be in England on trade, and come home as Biron does in *Isabella*, in the fourth act, when he is wanted. I am for introducing situations, sort of counterparts to situations which have been tried in other plays —*like*, but not the *same*. On this principle I

recommended a friend like Horatio in the "Fair Penitent," and on this principle I recommend a situation like Othello, with relation to Desdemona's intercession for Cassio. Bye-scenes may likewise receive hints. The son may see his mother at a mask or Feast, as Romeo, Juliet. The festivity of the company contrasts with the strong perturbations of the individuals. Dawley may be told his wife's past unchastity at a mask by some witch-character, as Macbeth upon the heath, in dark sentences. This may stir his brain, and be forgot, but come in aid of stronger proof hereafter. From this what you will perhaps call whimsical way of counterparting, this honest stealing, and original mode of plagiarism, much yet, I think, remains to be sucked. Excuse these abortions. I thought you would want the draught soon again, and I would not send it empty away.—Yours truly,

WILLIAM GODWIN!!!

Somers Town, September 17, 1801.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER C.] *February* 15, 1802.

Apropos, I think you wrong about my play. All the omissions are right. And the supplementary scene, in which Sandford narrates the manner in which his master is affected, is the

best in the book. It stands where a hodge-podge of German puerilities used to stand. I insist upon it that you like that scene. Love me, love that scene. I will now transcribe the "Londoner" (No. 1), and wind up all with affection and humble servant at the end.

[Here was transcribed the essay called "The Londoner," which was published some years afterwards in the *Reflector*, and which forms part of Lamb's collected works. He then proceeds] :—

"What is all this about?" said Mrs. Shandy. "A story of a cock and a bull," said Yorick: and so it is; but Manning will take good-naturedly what *God will send him* across the water: only I hope he won't *shut* his *eyes*, and *open* his *mouth*, as the children say, for that is the way to *gape*, and not to *read*. Manning, continue your laudable purpose of making me your register. I will render you back all your remarks; and *I*, *not you*, shall have received usury by having read them. In the meantime, may the great Spirit have you in his keeping, and preserve our Englishman from the inoculation of frivolity and sin upon French earth.

Allons—or what is it you say, instead of *good-bye?*

Mary sends her kind remembrance, and covets the remarks equally with me. C. LAMB.

LETTER CI.] *February* 1802.

Not a sentence, not a syllable of Trismegistus shall be lost through my neglect. I am his word-banker, his storekeeper of puns and syllogisms. You cannot conceive (and if Trismegistus cannot, no man can) the strange joy which I felt at the receipt of a letter from Paris. It seemed to give me a learned importance, which placed me above all who had not Parisian correspondents. Believe that I shall carefully husband every scrap, which will save you the trouble of memory, when you come back. You cannot write things so trifling, let them only be about Paris, which I shall not treasure. In particular, I must have parallels of actors and actresses. I must be told if any building in Paris is at all comparable to St. Paul's, which, contrary to the usual mode of that part of our nature called admiration, I have looked up to with unfading wonder, every morning at ten o'clock, ever since it has lain in my way to business. At noon I casually glance upon it, being hungry; and hunger has not much taste for the fine arts. Is any night-walk comparable to a walk from St. Paul's to Charing Cross, for lighting and paving, crowds going and coming without respite, the rattle of coaches, and the cheerfulness of shops? Have you seen a man guillotined yet? Is it as good as hanging? Are the women *all* painted, and the men *all* monkeys?

or are there not a *few* that look like *rational* of *both sexes?* Are you and the first consul *thick?* All this expense of ink I may fairly put you to, as your letters will not be solely for my proper pleasure; but are to serve as memoranda and notices, helps for short memory, a kind of Rumfordising recollection, for yourself on your return. Your letter was just what a letter should be, crammed, and very funny. Every part of it pleased me till you came to Paris; then your philosophical indolence, or indifference, stung me. You cannot stir from your rooms till you know the language! What the devil!—are men nothing but word-trumpets? Are men all tongue and ear? Have these creatures, that you and I profess to know *something about*, no faces, gestures, gabble, no folly, no absurdity, no induction of French education upon the abstract idea of men and women, no similitude nor dissimilitude to English! Why, thou cursed Smellfungus! your account of your landing and reception, and Bullen, (I forget how you spell it, it was spelt my way in Harry the Eighth's time), was exactly in that minute style which strong impressions INSPIRE (writing to a Frenchman, I write as a Frenchman would). It appears to me as if I should die with joy at the first landing in a foreign country. It is the nearest pleasure which a grown man can substitute for that unknown one, which he can never know, the pleasure of the first entrance into life

from the womb. I dare say, in a short time, my habits would come back like a "stronger man" armed, and drive out that new pleasure; and I should soon sicken for known objects. Nothing has transpired here that seems to me of sufficient importance to send dry-shod over the water: but I suppose you will want to be told some news. The best and the worst to me is, that I have given up two guineas a week at the *Post*, and regained my health and spirits, which were upon the wane. I grew sick, and Stuart unsatisfied. *Ludisti satis, tempus abire est;* I must cut closer, that's all. Mister Fell, or as you, with your usual facetiousness and drollery, call him, Mr. F + ll, has stopped short in the middle of his play. Some *friend* has told him that it has not the least merit in it. Oh that I had the rectifying of the Litany! I would put in a *libera nos* (*Scriptores videlicet*) *ab amicis!* That's all the news. *Apropos:* is it pedantry, writing to a Frenchman, to express myself sometimes by a French word, when an English one would not do as well? Methinks my thoughts fall naturally into it.

In all this time I have done but one thing, which I reckon tolerable, and that I will transcribe, because it may give you pleasure, being a picture of *my* humours. You will find it in my last page. It absurdly is a first Number of a series, thus strangled in embryo.

More news! The Professor's Rib has come

out to be a disagreeable woman, so much so as to drive me and some more old cronies from his house. He must not wonder if people are shy of coming to see him because of the "snakes."

C. L.

To Mr. RICKMAN

Letter CII.] *April* 10, 1802.

Dear Rickman—The enclosed letter explains itself. It will save me the danger of a corporal interview with the man-eater, who, if very sharp set, may take a fancy to me, if you will give me a short note, declaratory of probabilities. These from him who hopes to see you once or twice more before he goes hence, to be no more seen: for there is no tipple nor tobacco in the grave, whereunto he hasteneth. C. Lamb.

16, Mitre Court Buildings,
Inner Temple.

How clearly the Ghoul writes, and like a gentleman!

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Letter CIII.] *September* 8, 1802.

Dear Coleridge—I thought of not writing till we had performed some of our commissions; but

we have been hindered from setting about them, which yet shall be done to a tittle. We got home very pleasantly on Sunday. Mary is a good deal fatigued, and finds the difference of going *to* a place, and coming *from* it. I feel that I shall remember your mountains to the last day I live. They haunt me perpetually. I am like a man who has been falling in love unknown to himself, which he finds out when he leaves the lady. I do not remember any very strong impression while they were present; but, being gone, their mementos are shelved in my brain. We passed a very pleasant little time with the Clarksons. The Wordsworths are at Montagu's rooms, near neighbours to us. They dined with us yesterday, and I was their guide to Bartlemy Fair!

To Mrs. GODWIN

Letter CIV.] [Early in *September* 1802?]

Dear Mrs. G.—Having observed with some concern that Mr. Godwin is a little fastidious in what he eats for supper, I herewith beg to present his palate with a piece of dried salmon. I am assured it is the best that swims in Trent. If you do not know how to dress it, allow me to add, that it should be cut in thin slices and broiled in paper *previously prepared in butter*.

Wishing it exquisite, I remain,—Much as before, yours sincerely, C. LAMB.

Some add *mashed potatoes.*

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CV.] *London, September* 24, 1802.

My dear Manning—Since the date of my last letter I have been a traveller. A strong desire seized me of visiting remote regions. My first impulse was to go and see Paris. It was a trivial objection to my aspiring mind, that I did not understand a word of the language, since I certainly intend some time in my life to see Paris, and equally certainly intend never to learn the language; therefore that could be no objection. However, I am very glad I did not go, because you had left Paris (I see) before I could have set out. I believe, Stoddart promising to go with me another year prevented that plan. My next scheme (for to my restless, ambitious mind London was become a bed of thorns) was to visit the far-famed peak in Derbyshire, where the Devil sits, they say, without breeches. *This* my purer mind rejected as indelicate. And my final resolve was, a tour to the Lakes. I set out with Mary to Keswick, without giving Coleridge any notice, for my time, being precious, did not

admit of it. He received us with all the hospitality in the world, and gave up his time to show us all the wonders of the country. He dwells upon a small hill by the side of Keswick, in a comfortable house, quite enveloped on all sides by a net of mountains: great floundering bears and monsters they seemed, all couchant and asleep. We got in in the evening, travelling in a post-chaise from Penrith, in the midst of a gorgeous sunshine, which transmuted all the mountains into colours, purple, etc. etc. We thought we had got into fairyland. But that went off (as it never came again; while we stayed we had no more fine sunsets), and we entered Coleridge's comfortable study just in the dusk, when the mountains were all dark with clouds upon their heads. Such an impression I never received from objects of sight before, nor do I suppose I can ever again. Glorious creatures, fine old fellows, Skiddaw, etc. I never shall forget ye, how ye lay about that night, like an intrenchment; gone to bed, as it seemed for the night, but promising that ye were to be seen in the morning. Coleridge had got a blazing fire in his study; which is a large antique, ill-shaped room, with an old-fashioned organ, never played upon, big enough for a church, shelves of scattered folios, an Æolian harp, and an old sofa, half bed, etc. And all looking out upon the last fading view of Skiddaw, and his broad-breasted brethren: what a night! Here we stayed three full weeks,

in which time I visited Wordsworth's cottage, where we stayed a day or two with the Clarksons (good people, and most hospitable, at whose house we tarried one day and night), and saw Lloyd. The Wordsworths were gone to Calais. They have since been in London, and passed much time with us: he is now gone into Yorkshire to be married. So we have seen Keswick, Grasmere, Ambleside, Ulswater (where the Clarksons live), and a place at the other end of Ulswater; I forget the name; to which we travelled on a very sultry day, over the middle of Helvellyn. We have clambered up to the top of Skiddaw, and I have waded up the bed of Lodore. In fine, I have satisfied myself that there is such a thing as that which tourists call *romantic*, which I very much suspected before: they make such a spluttering about it, and toss their splendid epithets around them, till they give as dim a light as at four o'clock next morning the lamps do after an illumination. Mary was excessively tired when she got about half-way up Skiddaw, but we came to a cold rill (than which nothing can be imagined more cold, running over cold stones), and with the reinforcement of a draught of cold water she surmounted it most manfully. Oh, its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it, with a prospect of mountains all about and about, making you giddy; and then Scotland afar off, and the border countries so famous in song and ballad! It was a day that will stand out, like

a mountain, I am sure, in my life. But I am returned (I have now been come home near three weeks; I was a month out), and you cannot conceive the degradation I felt at first, from being accustomed to wander free as air among mountains, and bathe in rivers without being controlled by any one, to come home and *work*. I felt very *little*. I had been dreaming I was a very great man. But that is going off, and I find I shall conform in time to that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me. Besides, after all, Fleet Street and the Strand are better places to live in for good and all than amidst Skiddaw. Still, I turn back to those great places where I wandered about, participating in their greatness. After all, I could not *live* in Skiddaw. I could spend a year, two, three years among them, but I must have a prospect of seeing Fleet Street at the end of that time, or I should mope and pine away, I know. Still, Skiddaw is a fine creature. My habits are changing, I think, *i.e.* from drunk to sober. Whether I shall be happier or not remains to be proved. I shall certainly be more happy in a morning; but whether I shall not sacrifice the fat, and the marrow, and the kidneys, *i.e.* the night, glorious care-drowning night, that heals all our wrongs, pours wine into our mortifications, changes the scene from indifferent and flat to bright and brilliant! O Manning, if I should have formed a diabolical resolution, by the time

you come to England, of not admitting any spirituous liquors into my house, will you be my guest on such shameworthy terms? Is life, with such limitations, worth trying? The truth is, that my liquors bring a nest of friendly harpies about my house, who consume me. This is a pitiful tale to be read at St. Gothard, but it is just now nearest my heart. Fenwick is a ruined man. He is hiding himself from his creditors, and has sent his wife and children into the country. Fell, my other drunken companion (that has been: *nam hic cæstus artemque repono*), is turned editor of a Naval Chronicle. Godwin continues a steady friend, though the same facility does not remain of visiting him often. That . . . has detached Marshall from his house; Marshall, the man who went to sleep when the "Ancient Mariner" was reading; the old, steady, unalterable friend of the Professor. Holcroft is not yet come to town. I expect to see him, and will deliver your message. Things come crowding in to say, and no room for 'em. Some things are too little to be told, *i.e.* to have a preference; some are too big and circumstantial. Thanks for yours, which was most delicious. Would I had been with you, benighted, etc.! I fear my head is turned with wandering. I shall never be the same acquiescent being. Farewell. Write again quickly, for I shall not like to hazard a letter, not knowing where the fates have carried you. Farewell, my dear fellow. C. LAMB.

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LETTER CVI.] *October* 9, 1802.

CAROLUS AGNUS COLERIDGIO SUO S.

Carissime—Scribis, ut nummos scilicet epistolarios solvam et postremo in Tartara abeam: immo tu potius Tartaricum (ut aiunt) deprehendisti, qui me vernaculâ meâ linguâ pro scribâ conductitio per tot annos satis eleganter usum ad Latinè impure et canino fere ore latrandum per tuasmet epistolas benè compositas et concinnatas percellere studueris. Conabor tamen: Attamen vereor, ut Ædes istas nostri Christi, inter quas tantâ diligentiâ magistri improbâ bonis literulis, quasi per clysterem quendam injectis, infrà supràque olim penitùs imbutus fui, Barnesii et Marklandii doctissimorum virorum nominibus adhuc gaudentes, barbarismis meis peregrinis et aliunde quæsitis valde dehonestavero. Sed pergere quocunque placet. Adeste igitur, quotquot estis, conjugationum declinationumve turmæ, terribilia spectra, et tu imprimis ades, Umbra et Imago maxima obsoletæ (Diis gratiæ) Virgæ, quâ novissime in mentem receptâ, horrescunt subito natales, et parum deest quo minùs braccas meas ultro usque ad crura demittam, et ipse puer pueriliter ejulem.

Ista tua Carmina Chamouniana satis grandia esse mihi constat; sed hoc mihi nonnihil

displicet, quòd in iis illæ montium Grisosonum inter se responsiones totidem reboant anglicè, *God*, *God*, haud aliter atque temet audivi tuas montes Cumbrianas resonare docentem, *Dodd*, *Dodd*, nempe Doctorem infelicem : vocem certe haud Deum Sonantem. Pro cæteris plaudo.

Itidem comparationes istas tuas satis callidas et lepidas certè novi : sed quid hoc ad verum ? cum illi Consulari viro et *mentem irritabilem* istum Julianum : et etiam *astutias frigidulas* quasdam Augusto propriores, nequaquam congruenter uno afflatu comparationis causâ insedisse affirmaveris : necnon nescio quid similitudinis etiam cum Tiberio tertio in loco solicite produxeris. Quid tibi equidem cum uno vel altero Cæsare, cùm universi Duodecim ad comparationes tuas se ultro tulerint ? Præterea, vetustati adnutans, comparationes iniquas odi.

Istas Wordsworthianas nuptias (vel potius cujusdam *Edmundii* tui) te retulisse mirificum gaudeo. Valeas, Maria, fortunata nimium, et antiquæ illæ Mariæ Virgini (comparatione plusquam Cæsareanâ) forsitan comparanda, quoniam "beata inter mulieres" : et etiam fortasse Wordsworthium ipsum tuum maritum Angelo Salutatori æquare fas erit, quoniam e Cœlo (ut ille) descendunt et Musæ et ipsi Musicolæ : at Wordsworthium Musarum observantissimum semper novi. Necnon te quoque affinitate hâc novâ, Dorothea, gratulor : et tu certe alterum *donum Dei*.

Istum Ludum, quem tu, Coleridgi, Americanum garris, a Ludo (ut Ludi sunt) maximè abhorrentem prætereo: nempe quid ad Ludum attinet, totius illæ gentis Columbianæ, a nostrâ gente, eadem stirpe ortâ, ludi singuli causa voluntatem perperam alienare? Quæso ego materiam ludi: tu Bella ingeris.

Denique valeas, et quid de Latinitate meâ putes, dicas: facias ut opossum illum nostrum volantem vel (ut tu malis) quendam Piscem errabundum, a me salvum et pulcherrimum esse jubeas. Valeant uxor tua cum Hartleiio nostro. Soror mea salva est et ego: vos et ipsa salvere jubet. Ulterius progrediri non liquet: homo sum æratus.

P.S.—Pene mihi exciderat, apud me esse Librorum a Johanno Miltono Latinè scriptorum volumina duo, quæ (Deo volente) cum cæteris tuis libris ocyùs citiùs per Mariam ad te missura curabo; sed me in hoc tali genere rerum nullo modo *festinantem* novisti: habes confitentem reum. Hoc solum dici restat, prædicta volumina pulchra esse et omnia opera Latina J. M. in se continere. Circa defensionem istam Pro Pop°. Ang°. acerrimam in præsens ipse præclaro gaudio moror.

Jussa tua Stuartina faciam ut diligenter colam.
Iterum iterumque valeas:
Et facias memor sis nostri.

LETTER CVII.] *October* 11, 1802.

Dear Coleridge—Your offer about the German poems is exceedingly kind: but I do not think it a wise speculation, because the time it would take you to put them into prose would be nearly as great as if you versified them. Indeed I am sure you could do the one nearly as soon as the other; so that instead of a division of labour, it would be only a multiplication. But I will think of your offer in another light. I daresay I could find many things, of a light nature, to suit that paper, which you would not object to pass upon Stuart as your own, and I should come in for some light profits, and Stuart think the more highly of your assiduity. "Bishop Hall's Characters" I know nothing about, having never seen them. I will reconsider your offer, which is very plausible; but as to the drudgery of going every day to an editor with my scraps, like a pedler, for him to pick out and tumble about my ribbons and posies, and to wait in his lobby, etc., no money could make up for the degradation. You are in too high request with him to have anything unpleasant of that sort to submit to.

It was quite a slip of my pen, in my Latin letter, when I told you I had Milton's Latin Works. I ought to have said his Prose Works, in two volumes, Birch's edition, containing all, both Latin and English, a fuller and better edition

than Lloyd's of Toland. It is completely at your service, and you must accept it from me; at the same time I shall be much obliged to you for your Latin Milton, which you think you have at Howitt's; it will leave me nothing to wish for but the *History of England*, which I shall soon pick up for a trifle. But you must write me word whether the Miltons are worth paying carriage for. You have a Milton; but it is pleasanter to eat one's own pease out of one's own garden, than to buy them by the peck at Covent Garden; and a book reads the better, which is our own, and has been so long known to us, that we know the topography of its blots and dog's-ears, and can trace the dirt in it to having read it at tea with buttered muffins, or over a pipe, which I think is the maximum. But, Coleridge, you must accept these little things, and not think of returning money for them, for I do not set up for a factor or general agent. As for the fantastic debt of £15, I'll think you were dreaming, and not trouble myself seriously to attend to you. My bad Latin you properly correct; but *natales* for *nates* was an inadvertency: I knew better. *Progrediri*, or *progredi*, I thought indifferent, my authority being Ainsworth. However, as I have got a fit of Latin, you will now and then indulge me with an *epistola*. I pay the postage of this, and propose doing it by turns. In that case I can now and then write to you without remorse;

not that you would mind the money, but you have not always ready cash to answer small demands, the *epistolarii nummi.*

Your "Epigram on the Sun and Moon in Germany" is admirable. Take 'em all together, they are as good as Harrington's. I will muster up all the conceits I can, and you shall have a packet some day. You and I together can answer all demands surely: you, mounted on a terrible charger (like Homer, in the Battle of the Books), at the head of the cavalry: I will lead the light horse. I have just heard from Stoddart. Allen and he intend taking Keswick in their way home. Allen wished particularly to have it a secret that he is in Scotland, and wrote to me accordingly very urgently. As luck was, I had told not above three or four; but Mary had told Mrs. Green, of Christ's Hospital! For the present, farewell: never forgetting love to Pipos and his friends. C. LAMB.

LETTER CVIII.] *October* 23, 1802.

I read daily your political essays. I was particularly pleased with "Once a Jacobin": though the argument is obvious enough, the style was less swelling than your things sometimes are, and it was plausible *ad populum.* A vessel has just arrived from Jamaica with the news of poor Sam Le Grice's death. He died at Jamaica of the yellow fever. His course was

rapid, and he had been very foolish; but I believe there was more of kindness and warmth in him than in almost any other of our schoolfellows. The annual meeting of the Blues is tomorrow, at the London Tavern, where poor Sammy dined with them two years ago, and attracted the notice of all by the singular foppishness of his dress. When men go off the stage so early, it scarce seems a noticeable thing in their epitaphs, whether they had been wise or silly in their lifetime.

I am glad the snuff and Pi-pos's books please. "Goody Two Shoes" is almost out of print. Mrs. Barbauld's stuff has banished all the old classics of the nursery; and the shopman at Newberry's hardly deigned to reach them off an old exploded corner of a shelf, when Mary asked for them. Mrs. Barbauld's and Mrs. Trimmer's nonsense lay in piles about. Knowledge insignificant and vapid as Mrs. Barbauld's books convey, it seems, must come to a child in the *shape of knowledge;* and his empty noddle must be turned with conceit of his own powers when he has learnt that a horse is an animal, and Billy is better than a horse, and such like; instead of that beautiful interest in wild tales, which made the child a man, while all the time he suspected himself to be no bigger than a child. Science has succeeded to poetry no less in the little walks of children than with men. Is there no possibility of averting this sore evil? Think what you would have been now, if, instead of being fed with tales

and old wives' fables in childhood, you had been crammed with geography and natural history !

Hang them !—I mean the cursed Barbauld crew, those blights and blasts of all that is human in man and child.

As to the translations, let me do two or three hundred lines, and then do you try the nostrums upon Stuart in any way you please. If they go down I will bray more. In fact, if I got or could but get £50 a year only, in addition to what I have, I should live in affluence.

Have you anticipated it, or could you not give a parallel of Buonaparte with Cromwell, particularly as to the contrast in their deeds affecting *foreign* States ? Cromwell's interference for the Albigenses, Buonaparte's against the Swiss. Then religion would come in ; and Milton and you could rant about our countrymen of that period. This is a hasty suggestion, the more hasty because I want my supper. I have just finished Chapman's Homer. Did you ever read it ? it has the continuous power of interesting you all along, like a rapid original, more than any ; and in the uncommon excellence of the more finished parts goes beyond Fairfax or any of 'em. The metre is fourteen syllables, and capable of all sweetness and grandeur. Cowper's blank verse detains you every step with some heavy Miltonism ; Chapman gallops off with you his own free pace. Take a simile for example. The council breaks up—

"Being abroad, the earth was overlaid
With flockers to them, that came forth; as when of frequent bees
Swarms rise out of a hollow rock, repairing the degrees
Of their egression endlessly, with ever rising new
From forth their sweet nest; as their store, still as it faded, grew,
And never would cease sending forth her clusters to the spring,
They still crowd out so; this flock here, that there, belabouring
The loaded flowers. So," etc. etc.

What *endless egression of phrases* the dog commands!

Take another, Agamemnon wounded, bearing his wound heroically for the sake of the army (look below), to a woman in labour.

"He, with his lance, sword, mighty stones, pour'd his heroic wreak
On other squadrons of the foe, whiles yet warm blood did break
Thro' his cleft veins; but when the wound was quite exhaust and crude,
The eager anguish did approve his princely fortitude.
As when most sharp and bitter pangs distract a labouring dame,
Which the divine Ilithiæ, that rule the painful frame
Of human childbirth, pour on her; the Ilithiæ that are
The daughters of Saturnia; with whose extreme repair
The woman in her travail strives, to take the worst it gives;
With thought, it *must be, 'tis love's fruit, the end for which she lives;*
The mean to make herself new born, what comforts will redound:
So," etc.

I will tell you more about Chapman and his peculiarities in my next. I am much interested in him.

Yours ever affectionately, and Pi-Pos's.

C. L.

LETTER CIX.] *November* 4, 1802.

Observe, there comes to you, by the Kendal waggon to-morrow, the illustrious 5th of November, a box, containing the Miltons, the strange American Bible, with White's brief note, to which you will attend; *Baxter's Holy Commonwealth*, for which you stand indebted to me 3s. 6d.; an odd volume of Montaigne, being of no use to me, I having the whole; certain books belonging to Wordsworth, as do also the strange thick-hoofed shoes, which are very much admired in London. All these sundries I commend to your most strenuous looking after. If you find the Miltons in certain parts dirtied and soiled with a crumb of right Gloucester, blacked in the candle (my usual supper), or peradventure a stray ash of tobacco wafted into the crevices, look to that passage more especially; depend upon it, it contains good matter. I have got your little Milton, which, as it contains "Salmasius," and I make a rule of never hearing but one side of the question (why should I distract myself?), I shall return to you when I pick up the *Latina opera*. The first Defence is the greatest work among them, because it is uniformly great, and such as is befitting the very mouth of a great nation, speaking for itself. But the second Defence, which is but a succession of splendid episodes, slightly tied together, has one passage, which, if you have not read,

I conjure you to lose no time, but read it: it is his consolations in his blindness, which had been made a reproach to him. It begins whimsically, with poetical flourishes about Tiresias and other blind worthies (which still are mainly interesting as displaying his singular mind, and in what degree poetry entered into his daily soul, not by fits and impulses, but engrained and innate), but the concluding page, *i.e.* of *this passage* (not of the *Defensio*), which you will easily find, divested of all brags and flourishes, gives so rational, so true an enumeration of his comforts, so human, that it cannot be read without the deepest interest. Take one touch of the religious part:—"Et sane haud ultima Dei cura cæci—*we blind folks,* I understand it (not *nos* for *ego*;) —sumus; qui nos, quominus quicquam aliud præter ipsum cernere valemus, eo clementius atque benignius respicere dignatur. Væ qui illudit nos, væ qui lædit, execratione publica devovendo; nos ab injuriis hominum non modo incolumes, sed pene sacros, divina lex reddidit, divinus favor: nec tam *oculorum hebetudine* quam *cœlestium alarum umbrâ* has nobis fecisse tenebras videtur, factas illustrare rursus interiore ac longe præstabiliore lumine haud raro solet. Huc refero, quod et amici officiosius nunc etiam quam solebant, colunt, observant, adsunt, quod et nonnulli sunt, quibuscum Pyladeas atque Theseas alternare voces verorum amicorum liceat.

"Vade gubernaculum mei pedis.
Da manum ministro amico
Da collo manum tuam, ductor autem viæ ero tibi ego."

All this, and much more, is highly pleasing to know. But you may easily find it; and I don't know why I put down so many words about it but for the pleasure of writing to you, and the want of another topic.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

To-morrow I expect with anxiety S. T. C.'s letter to Mr. Fox.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CX.] *November* 1802.

My dear Manning—I must positively write, or I shall miss you at Toulouse. I sit here like a decayed minute hand; (I lie: *that* does not *sit*;) and being myself the exponent of no time, take no heed how the clocks about me are going. You possibly by this time may have explored all Italy, and toppled, unawares, into Etna, while you went too near those rotten-jawed, gap-toothed, old worn-out chaps of hell, —while I am meditating a quiescent letter to the honest post-master of Toulouse. But in case you should not have been *felo de se*, this is to tell you, that your letter was quite to my

palate: in particular your just remarks upon Industry, cursed Industry (though indeed you left me to explore the reason), were highly relishing. I have often wished I had lived in the golden age, when shepherds lay stretched upon flowers, and roused themselves at their leisure,—the genius there is in a man's natural idle face, that has not learned his multiplication table! before doubt, and propositions, and corollaries, got into the world!

Now, as Joseph Cottle, a Bard of Nature, sings, going up Malvern Hills,

> "How steep! how painful the ascent!
> It needs the evidence of *close deduction*
> To know that ever I shall gain the top."

You must know that Joe is lame, so that he had some reason for so singing. These two lines, I assure you, are taken *totidem literis* from a very *popular* poem. Joe is also an Epic Poet as well as a Descriptive, and has written a tragedy, though both his drama and epopoiea are strictly *descriptive*, and chiefly of the *Beauties of Nature*, for Joe thinks *man* with all his passions and frailties not a proper subject of the *Drama*. Joe's tragedy hath the following surpassing speech in it. Some king is told that his enemy has engaged twelve archers to come over in a boat from an enemy's country and waylay him; he thereupon pathetically exclaims—

> "*Twelve*, dost thou say? Curse on those dozen villains!"

Cottle read two or three acts out to us, very gravely on both sides till he came to this heroic touch,—and then he asked what we laughed at? I had no more muscles that day. A poet that chooses to read out his own verses has but a limited power over you. There is a bound where his authority ceases. *Apropos*, if you should go to Florence or to Rome, inquire what works are extant in gold, silver, bronze, or marble, of Benvenuto Cellini, a Florentine artist, whose life, doubtless, you have read, or if not, without controversy you must read—so haste ye, send for it immediately from Lane's circulating Library. It is always put among the Romances, but you have read it I suppose. In particular, inquire at Florence for his colossal bronze statue (in the Grand Square, or somewhere) of Perseus. You may read the story in Tooke's *Pantheon*. Nothing material has transpired in these parts. Coleridge has indited a violent Philippic against Mr. Fox in the *Morning Post*, which is a compound of expressions of humility, gentleman-ushering-in most arrogant charges. It will do Mr. Fox no real injury among those that know him.

LETTER CXI.] *February* 19, 1803.

My dear Manning—The general scope of your letter afforded no indications of insanity, but some particular points raised a scruple.

For God's sake don't think any more of "Independent Tartary." What are you to do among such Ethiopians? Is there no *lineal descendant* of Prester John? Is the chair empty? Is the sword unswayed? Depend upon it they'll never make you their king, as long as any branch of that great stock is remaining. I tremble for your Christianity. They will certainly circumcise you. Read Sir John Mandeville's travels to cure you, or come over to England. There is a Tartarman now exhibiting at Exeter Change. Come and talk with him, and hear what he says first. Indeed he is no very favourable specimen of his countrymen! But perhaps the best thing you can do is to *try* to get the idea out of your head. For this purpose repeat to yourself every night, after you have said your prayers, the words Independent Tartary, Independent Tartary, two or three times, and associate with them the *idea* of *oblivion* ('tis Hartley's method with obstinate memories), or say, Independent, Independent, have I not already got an *independence?* That was a clever way of the old puritans, pun-divinity. My dear friend, think what a sad pity it would be to bury such *parts* in heathen countries, among nasty, unconversable, horse-belching, Tartar-people! Some say, they are Cannibals; and then, conceive a Tartar-fellow *eating* my friend, and adding the *cool malignity* of mustard and vinegar! I am afraid 'tis the reading of Chaucer has

misled you; his foolish stories about Cambuscan, and the ring, and the horse of brass. Believe me, there are no such things, 'tis all the poet's *invention;* but if there were such darling things as old Chaucer sings, I would *up* behind you on the horse of brass, and frisk off for Prester John's country. But these are all tales; a horse of brass never flew, and a king's daughter never talked with birds! The Tartars, really, are a cold, insipid, smouchy set. You'll be sadly moped (if you are not eaten) among them. Pray *try* and cure yourself. Take hellebore (the counsel is Horace's, 'twas none of my thought *originally*). Shave yourself oftener. Eat no saffron, for saffron-eaters contract a terrible Tartar-like yellow. Pray, to avoid the fiend. Eat nothing that gives the heart-burn. *Shave the upper lip.* Go about like an European. Read no books of voyages (they are nothing but lies), only now and then a romance, to keep the fancy *under.* Above all, don't go to any sights of *wild beasts. That has been your ruin.* Accustom yourself to write familiar letters, on common subjects, to your friends in England, such as are of a moderate understanding. And think about common things more. There's your friend Holcroft, now, has written a Play. You used to be fond of the drama. Nobody went to see it. Notwithstanding this, with an audacity perfectly original, he faces the town down in a preface that they *did* like it very much. I have

heard a waspish punster say, "Sir, why did you not laugh at my jest?" But for a man boldly to face one out with "Sir, I maintain it, you *did* laugh at my jest," is a little too much. I have seen H. but once. He spoke of you to me in honourable terms. H. seems to me to be drearily dull. G———— is dull, then he has a dash of affectation, which smacks of the coxcomb, and your coxcombs are always agreeable. I supped last night with Rickman, and met a merry *natural* captain, who pleases himself vastly with once having made a pun at Otaheite in the O. language. 'Tis the same man who said Shakspeare he liked, because he was *so much of the gentleman*. Rickman is a man "absolute in all numbers." I think I may one day bring you acquainted, if you do not go to Tartary first; for you'll never come back. Have a care, my dear friend, of Anthropophagi! their stomachs are always craving. 'Tis terrible to be weighed out at fivepence a-pound; to sit at table (the reverse of fishes in Holland) not as a guest, but as a meat.

God bless you: do come to England. Air and exercise may do great things. Talk with some minister. Why not your father?

God dispose all for the best. I have discharged my duty.

Your sincere friend, C. LAMB.

LETTER CXII.] *March* 1803.

Dear Manning—I send you some verses I have made on the death of a young Quaker you may have heard me speak of as being in love with for some years while I lived at Pentonville, though I had never spoken to her in my life. She died about a month since. If you have interest with the Abbé de Lisle, you may get 'em translated; he has done as much for the Georgics.

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LETTER CXIII.] *March* 20, 1803.

Mary sends love from home.

Dear Coleridge—I do confess that I have not sent your books as I ought to have done; but you know how the human free will is tethered, and that we perform promises to ourselves no better than to our friends. A watch is come for you. Do you want it soon, or shall I wait till some one travels your way? You, like me, I suppose, reckon the lapse of time from the waste thereof, as boys let a cock run to waste; too idle to stop it, and rather amused with seeing it dribble. Your poems have begun printing; Longman sent to me to arrange them, the old and the new together. It seems you have left

it to him ; so I classed them, as nearly as I could, according to dates. First, after the Dedication (which must march first), and which I have transplanted from before the Preface (which stood like a dead wall of prose between), to be the first poem ; then comes "The Pixies," and the things most juvenile ; then on "To Chatterton," etc.,—on, lastly, to the "Ode on the Departing Year," and "Musings,"—which finish. Longman wanted the Ode first, but the arrangement I have made is precisely that marked out in the Dedication, following the order of time. I told Longman I was sure that you would omit a good portion of the first edition. I instanced several sonnets, etc. ; but that was not his plan, and, as you have done nothing in it, all I could do was to arrange 'em on the supposition that all were to be retained. A few I positively rejected ; such as that of "The Thimble," and that of "Flicker and Flicker's Wife," and that *not* in the manner of Spenser, which you yourself had stigmatised—and the "Man of Ross,"—I doubt whether I should this last. It is not too late to save it. The first proof is only just come. I have been forced to call that Cupid's Elixir, "Kisses." It stands in your first volume, as an Effusion, so that, instead of prefixing "The Kiss" to that of "One Kiss, dear Maid," etc., I have ventured to entitle it "To Sara." I am aware of the nicety of changing even so mere a trifle as a

title to so short a piece, and subverting old associations; but two called "Kisses" would have been absolutely ludicrous, and "Effusion" is no name, and these poems come close together. I promise you not to alter one word in any poem whatever, but to take your last text, where two are. Can you send any wishes about the book? Longman, I think, should have settled with you; but it seems you have left it to him. Write as soon as you possibly can; for, without making myself responsible, I feel myself, in some sort, accessory to the selection, which I am to proof-correct; but I decidedly said to Biggs that I was sure you would omit more. Those I have positively rubbed off, I can swear to *individually* (except the "Man of Ross," which is too familiar in Pope), but no others—you have your cue. For my part, I would rather all the *Juvenilia* were kept—*memoriæ causâ*.

Robert Lloyd has written me a masterly letter, containing a character of his father. See how different from Charles he views the old man! (*Literatim*): "My father smokes, repeats Homer in Greek, and Virgil, and is learning, when from business, with all the vigour of a young man, Italian. He is, really, a wonderful man. He mixes public and private business, the intricacies of disordering life, with his religion and devotion. No one more rationally enjoys the romantic scenes of Nature, and the

chit-chat and little vagaries of his children ; and, though surrounded with an ocean of affairs, the very neatness of his most obscure cupboard in the house passes not unnoticed. I never knew any one view with such clearness, nor so well satisfied with things as they are, and make such allowance for things which must appear perfect Syriac to him." By the last he means the Lloydisms of the younger branches. His portrait of Charles (exact as far as he has had opportunities of noting him) is most exquisite :—" Charles is become steady as a church, and as straightforward as a Roman road. It would distract him to mention anything that was not as plain as sense ; he seems to have run the whole scenery of life, and now rests as the formal precisian of non-existence." Here is genius, I think, and 'tis seldom a young man, a Lloyd, looks at a father (so differing) with such goodnature while he is alive. Write—

I am in post-haste, C. LAMB.

Love, etc., to Sara, P., and H.

LETTER CXIV.] *April* 13, 1803.

My dear Coleridge—Things have gone on better with me since you left me. I expect to have my old housekeeper home again in a week or two. She has mended most rapidly. My health too has been better since you took away that Montero cap. I have left off cayenned

eggs and such bolsters to discomfort. There was death in that cap. I mischievously wished that by some inauspicious jolt the whole contents might be shaken, and the coach set on fire; for you said they had that property. How the old gentleman, who joined you at Grantham, would have clapp'd his hands to his knees, and not knowing but it was an immediate visitation of God that burnt him, how pious it would have made him!—him, I mean, that brought the Influenza with him, and only took places for one—an old sinner; he must have known what he had got with him! However, I wish the cap no harm for the sake of the *head it fits*, and could be content to see it disfigure my healthy sideboard again.

What do you think of smoking? I want your sober, *average*, *noon opinion* of it. I generally am eating my dinner about the time I should determine it.

Morning is a girl, and can't smoke—she's no evidence one way or the other; and Night is so evidently *bought over*, that he can't be a very upright judge. May be the truth is, that *one* pipe is wholesome, *two* pipes toothsome, *three* pipes noisome, *four* pipes fulsome, *five* pipes quarrelsome, and that's the *sum* on't. But that is deciding rather upon rhyme than reason. . . . After all, our instincts *may* be best. Wine, I am sure—good mellow, generous Port—can hurt nobody, unless those who take it to excess, which

they may easily avoid if they observe the rules of temperance.

Bless you, old sophist, who next to human nature taught me all the corruption I was capable of knowing! And bless your Montero cap, and your trail (which shall come after you whenever you appoint), and your wife and children—Pipos especially.

When shall we two smoke again? Last night I had been in a sad quandary of spirits, in what they call the evening; but a pipe, and some generous Port, and *King Lear* (being alone), had their effects as solacers. I went to bed pot-valiant. By the way, may not the Ogles of Somersetshire be remotely descended from King Lear? C. L.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CXV.] *April* 23, 1803.

My dear Manning—Although something of the latest, and after two months' waiting, your letter was highly gratifying. Some parts want a little explication; for example, "the god-like face of the first consul." *What god* does he most resemble, Mars, Bacchus, or Apollo? or the god Serapis, who, flying (as Egyptian chronicles deliver) from the fury of the dog Anubis (the hieroglyph of an English mastiff), lighted upon

Monomotapa (or the land of apes), by some thought to be Old France, and there set up a tyranny, etc. Our London prints of him represent him gloomy and sulky, like an angry Jupiter. I hear that he is very small, even less than me. I envy you your access to this great man, much more than your séances and conversaziones, which I have a shrewd suspicion must be something dull. What you assert concerning the actors of Paris, that they exceed our comedians, bad as ours are, is *impossible*. In one sense it may be true, that their fine gentlemen, in what is called genteel comedy, may possibly be more brisk and *dégagé* than Mr. Caulfield, or Mr. Whitfield; but have any of them the power to move *laughter in excess?* or can a Frenchman *laugh?* Can they batter at your judicious ribs till they *shake*, nothing loth to be so shaken? This is John Bull's criterion, and it shall be mine. You are Frenchified. Both your tastes and morals are corrupt and perverted. By and by you will come to assert that Buonaparte is as great a general as the old Duke of Cumberland, and deny that one Englishman can beat three Frenchmen. Read *Henry the Fifth* to restore your orthodoxy.

All things continue at a stay-still in London. I cannot repay your new novelties with my stale reminiscences. Like the prodigal, I have spent my patrimony, and feed upon the superannuated chaff and dry husks of repentance; yet sometimes

I remember with pleasure the hounds and horses, which I kept in the days of my prodigality. I find nothing new, nor anything that has so much of the gloss and dazzle of novelty as may rebound in narrative, and cast a reflective glimmer across the channel. Something I will say about people that you and I know. Fenwick is still in debt, and the Professor has not done making love to his new spouse. I think he never looks into an almanack, or he would have found by the calendar that the honeymoon was extinct a moon ago. Southey is Secretary to the Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer ; £400 a year. Stoddart is turned Doctor of Civil Law, and dwells in Doctors' Commons. I fear *his* commons are short, as they say. Did I send you an epitaph I scribbled upon a poor girl who died at nineteen? —a good girl, and a pretty girl, and a clever girl, but strangely neglected by all her friends and kin.

Under this cold marble stone
Sleep the sad remains of one
Who, when alive, by few or none
Was loved, as loved she might have been,
If she prosperous days had seen,
Or had thriving been, I ween.
Only this cold funeral stone
Tells she was beloved by one,
Who on the marble graves his moan.

Brief, and pretty, and tender, is it not? I send you this, being the only piece of poetry I have *done* since the Muses all went with T. M. to Paris. I have neither stuff in my brain, nor

paper in my drawer, to write you a longer letter. Liquor and company and wicked tobacco, a'nights, have quite dispericraniated me, as one may say ; but you, who spiritualise upon Champagne, may continue to write long letters, and stuff 'em with amusement to the end. Too long they cannot be, any more than a codicil to a will, which leaves me sundry parks and manors not specified in the deed. But don't be *two months* before you write again. These from merry old England, on the day of her valiant patron St. George. C. LAMB.

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LETTER CXVI.] *May* 27, 1803.

My dear Coleridge—The date of my last was one day prior to the receipt of your letter, full of foul omens. I explain this lest you should have thought mine too light a reply to such sad matter. I seriously hope by this time you have given up all thoughts of journeying to the green Islands of the Bless'd—(voyages in time of war are very precarious)—or at least, that you will take them in your way to the Azores. Pray be careful of this letter till it has done its duty, for it is to inform you that I have booked off your watch (laid in cotton like an untimely fruit), and with it Condillac, and all other books of yours

which were left here. These will set out on Monday next, the 29th May, by Kendal waggon, from White Horse, Cripplegate. You will make seasonable inquiries, for a watch mayn't come your way again in a hurry. I have been repeatedly after Tobin, and now hear that he is in the country, not to return till the middle of June. I will take care and see him with the earliest. But cannot you write pathetically to him, enforcing a speeding mission of your books for literary purposes? He is too good a retainer to Literature to let her interests suffer through his default. And why, in the name of Beelzebub, are your books to travel from Barnard's Inn to the Temple, and thence circuitously to Cripplegate, when their business is to take a short cut down Holborn Hill, up Snow ditto, on to Wood Street, etc.? The former mode seems a sad superstitious subdivision of labour. Well! the "Man of Ross" is to stand; Longman begs for it; the printer stands with a wet sheet in one hand, and a useless Pica in the other, in tears, pleading for it; I relent. Besides, it was a *Salutation* poem, and has the mark of the beast "Tobacco" upon it. Thus much I have done; I have swept off the lines about *widows* and *orphans* in second edition, which (if you remember) you most awkwardly and illogically caused to be inserted between two *Ifs*, to the great breach and disunion of said *Ifs*, which now meet again (as in first edition), like two clever lawyers arguing a case.

Another reason for subtracting the pathos was, that the "Man of Ross" is too familiar to need telling what he did, especially in worse lines than Pope told it, and it now stands simply as "Reflections at an Inn about a known Character," and sucking an old story into an accommodation with present feelings. Here is no breaking spears with Pope, but a new, independent, and really a very pretty poem. In fact 'tis as I used to admire it in the first volume, and I have even dared to restore

"If neath this roof thy *wine-cheer'd* moments pass,"

for

"Beneath this roof if thy cheer'd moments pass."

"Cheer'd" is a sad general word; "*wine-cheer'd*" I'm sure you'd give me, if I had a speaking-trumpet to sound to you 300 miles. But I am your *factotum;* and that (save in this instance, which is a single case, and I can't get at you) shall be next to a *fac-nihil*—at most a *fac-simile.* I have ordered "Imitation of Spenser" to be restored on Wordsworth's authority; and now, all that you will miss will be "Flicker and Flicker's wife," "The Thimble," "Breathe *dear harmonist,*" and *I believe*, "The Child that was fed with Manna." Another volume will clear off all your Anthologic Morning-Postian Epistolary Miscellanies; but pray don't put "Christabel" therein; don't let that sweet maid come forth attended with Lady Holland's mob at her

heels. Let there be a separate volume of Tales, Choice Tales, "Ancient Mariners," etc. A word of your health will be richly acceptable.

C. LAMB.

To MR. RICKMAN

LETTER CXVII.] *Saturday Morning, July* 16, 1803.

Dear Rickman—I enclose you a wonder, a letter from the shades. A dead body wants to return, and be inrolled *inter vivos*. 'Tis a gentle ghost, and in this Galvanic age it may have a chance.

Mary and I are setting out for the Isle of Wight. We make but a short stay, and shall pass the time betwixt that place and Portsmouth, where Fenwick is. I sadly wanted to explore the Peak this Summer; but Mary is against steering without card or compass, and we should be at large in Darbyshire.

We shall be at home this night and to-morrow, if you can come and take a farewell pipe.

I regularly transmitted your Notices to the *Morning Post*, but they have not been duly honoured. The fault lay not in me.—Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM GODWIN

LETTER CXVIII.] *November* 8, 1803.

My dear Sir—I have been sitting down for three or four days successively to the review, which I so much wished to do well, and to your satisfaction. But I can produce nothing but absolute flatness and nonsense. My health and spirits are so bad, and my nerves so irritable, that I am sure, if I persist, I shall tease myself into a fever. You do not know how sore and weak a brain I have, or you would allow for many things in me which you set down for whims. I solemnly assure you that I never more wished to prove to you the value which I have for you than at this moment; but although so seemingly trifling a service, I cannot get through with it: I pray you to impute it to this one sole cause, ill health. I hope I am above subterfuge, and that you will do me this justice to think so.

You will give me great satisfaction by sealing my pardon and oblivion in a line or two, before I come to see you, or I shall be ashamed to come.—Your, with great truth, C. LAMB.

LETTER CXIX.] *November* 10, 1803.

Dear Godwin — You never made a more unlucky and perverse mistake than to suppose

that the reason of my not writing that cursed thing was to be found in your book. I assure you most sincerely that I have been greatly delighted with "Chaucer." I may be wrong, but I think there is one considerable error runs through it, which is a conjecturing spirit, a fondness for filling out the picture by supposing what Chaucer did and how he felt, where the materials are scanty. So far from meaning to withhold from you (out of mistaken tenderness) this opinion of mine, I plainly told Mrs. Godwin that I did find a *fault*, which I should reserve naming until I should see you and talk it over. This she may very well remember, and also that I declined naming this fault until she drew it from me by asking me if there was not too much fancy in the work. I then confessed generally what I felt, but refused to go into particulars until I had seen you. I am never very fond of saying things before third persons, because in the relation (such is human nature) something is sure to be dropped. If Mrs. Godwin has been the cause of your misconstruction, I am very angry, tell her ; yet it is not an anger unto death. I remember also telling Mrs. G. (which she may have *dropt*) that I was by turns considerably more delighted than I expected. But I wished to reserve all this until I saw you. I even had conceived an expression to meet you with, which was thanking you for some of the most exquisite pieces of criticism I had ever read in my life.

In particular, I should have brought forward that on "Troilus and Cressida" and Shakspeare which, it is little to say, delighted me, and instructed me (if not absolutely *instructed* me, yet put into *full-grown sense* many conceptions which had arisen in me before in my most discriminating moods). All these things I was preparing to say, and bottling them up till I came, thinking to please my friend and host the author, when lo! this deadly blight intervened.

I certainly ought to make great allowances for your misunderstanding me. You, by long habits of composition and a greater command gained over your own powers, cannot conceive of the desultory and uncertain way in which I (an author by fits) sometimes cannot put the thoughts of a common letter into sane prose. Any work which I take upon myself as an engagement will act upon me to torment, *e.g.* when I have undertaken, as three or four times I have, a schoolboy copy of verses for Merchant Taylors' boys, at a guinea a copy, I have fretted over them in perfect inability to do them, and have made my sister wretched with my wretchedness for a week together. The same, till by habit I have acquired a mechanical command, I have felt in making paragraphs. As to reviewing, in particular, my head is so whimsical a head, that I cannot, after reading another man's book, let it have been never so pleasing, give any account of it in any methodical way. I cannot

follow his train. Something like this you must have perceived of me in conversation. Ten thousand times I have confessed to you, talking of my talents, my utter inability to remember in any comprehensive way what I read. I can vehemently applaud, or perversely stickle, at *parts;* but I cannot grasp at a whole. This infirmity (which is nothing to brag of) may be seen in my two little compositions, the tale and my play, in both which no reader, however partial, can find any story. I wrote such stuff about Chaucer, and got into such digressions, quite irreducible into $1\frac{1}{5}$ column of a paper, that I was perfectly ashamed to show it you. However, it is become a serious matter that I should convince you I neither slunk from the task through a wilful deserting neglect, or through any (most imaginary on your part) distaste of "Chaucer"; and I will try my hand again, I hope with better luck. My health is bad and my time taken up; but all I can spare between this and Sunday shall be employed for you, since you desire it: and if I bring you a crude, wretched paper on Sunday, you must burn it, and forgive me; if it proves anything better than I predict, may it be a peace-offering of sweet incense between us. C. LAMB.

To ROBERT LLOYD

LETTER CXX.] *March* 13, 1804.

Dear Robert—I received your notes safe, and thank you for them. It seems you are about to be married. Joy to you and uninterrupted satisfaction in that state. But who is the Lady? It is the character of your letters that you omit facts, dates, names, and matter, and describe nothing but feelings, in which, as I cannot always partake, as being more intense in degree or different in kind from my own tranquil ones, I cannot always well tell how to reply. Your dishes are too much sauced and spiced and flavoured for me to suppose that you can relish my plain meats and vulgar aliment. Still, Robert, if I cannot always send you of the same, they have a smack and a novelty, a Robert-ism about them, that make them a dainty stimulus to my palate at times. I have little to tell you of. You are mistaken, I am disengaged from all newspaper connections, and breathe a freer air in consequence. I was bound, like Gulliver, in a multitude of little chains, which, by quotidian leasing swelled to a rack and a gibbet in the year's account. I am poorer but happier. Your three pounds came seasonably, but I doubt whether I am fairly entitled to them as a debt.

I am obliged to break off here, and would

not send this unfinished, but that you might otherwise be uneasy about the moneys.

Am I ever to see you? for it is like letters to the dead, or for a friend to write to his friend in the Fortunate Isles, or the Moon, or at the Antipodes, to address a line to ONE in Warwickshire that I am never to see in London. I shall lose the very face of Robert by disuse, and I question, if I were a painter, if I could now paint it from memory.

I could tell you many things, but you are so spiritual and abstracted, that I fear to insult you with tidings of this world. But may your approaching husband-hood humanise you. I think I see a dawn. I am sure joy is rising upon you, and I stand a tiptoe to see the sun ascending till it gets up and up, and "while a man tells the story," shows at last a fair face and a full light.

God bless you, Robt., C. L.

LETTER CXXI.] *September* 13, 1804.

Dear Robert—I was startled in a very pleasant manner by the contents of your letter. It was like your good self to take so handsome an opportunity of renewing an old friendship. I thank you kindly for your offers to bring me acquainted with Mrs. Ll. I cannot come now, but assuredly I will some time or other, to see how this new relation sits upon you. I am

naturally shy of new faces; but the Lady who has chosen my old friend Robert cannot have a repelling one. Assure her of my sincere congratulations and friendly feelings. Mary joins in both with me, and considers herself as only left out of your kind invitation by some LAPSUS STYLI. We have already had all the holydays we can have this year. We have been spending our usual summer month at Richmond, from which place we traced the banks of the old Thames for ten and twenty miles, in daily walks or rides, and found beauties which may compare with Ulswater and Windermere. We visited Windsor, Hampton, etc. etc.—but this is a deviation from the subject with which I began my letter.

Some day I certainly shall come and see you in your new light; no longer the restless (but good) [? single] Robert; but now the staid, sober (and not less good) married Robert. And how does Plumstead, the impetuous, take your getting the start of him? When will he subside into matrimony? Priscilla has taken a long time indeed to think about it. I will suppose that her first choice is now her final; though you do not expressly say that she is to be a Wordsworth. I wish her, and dare promise her, all happiness.

All these new nuptials do not make me unquiet in the perpetual prospect of celibacy. There is a quiet dignity in old bachelorhood,

a leisure from cares, noise, etc., an enthronisation upon the armed-chair of a man's feeling that he may sit, walk, read, unmolested, to none accountable—but hush! or I shall be torn in pieces like a churlish Orpheus by young married women and bride-maids of Birmingham. The close is this, to every man that way of life, which in his election is best. Be as happy in yours as I am determined to be in mine, and we shall strive lovingly who shall sing best the praises of matrimony, and the praises of singleness.

Adieu, my old friend in a new character, and believe me that no "wounds" have pierced our friendship; only a long want of seeing each other has disfurnished us of topics on which to talk. Is not your new fortunes a topic which may hold us for some months (the honey months at least)? C. LAMB.

To ROBERT SOUTHEY

LETTER CXXII.] *November* 7, 1804.

Dear Southey—You were the last person from whom we heard of Dyer, and if you know where to forward to him the news I now send I shall be obliged to you to lose no time. Dyer's sister-in-law, who lives in St. Dunstan's Court, wrote to him about three weeks ago to the

Hoop Inn, Cambridge, to inform him that Squire Houlbert, or some such name, of Denmark Hill, has died, and left her husband a thousand pounds, and two or three hundred to Dyer. Her letter got no answer, and she does not know where to direct to him; so she came to me, who am equally in the dark. Her story is, that Dyer's immediately coming to town now, and signing some papers, will save him a considerable sum of money; how, I don't understand; but it is very right he should hear of this. She has left me barely time for the post; so I conclude with love to all at Keswick.

Dyer's brother, who by his wife's account has got £1000 left him, is father of the little dirty girl, Dyer's niece and factotum.—In haste,

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

If you send George this, cut off the last paragraph.

D.'s laundress had a letter a few days since; but George never dates.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CXXIII.] 16, *Mitre Court Buildings*, *Saturday, February* 24, 1805.

Dear Manning—I have been very unwell since I saw you: a sad depression of spirits, a

most unaccountable nervousness; from which I have been partially relieved by an odd accident. You knew Dick Hopkins, the swearing scullion of Caius? This fellow, by industry and agility, has thrust himself into the important situations (no sinecures, believe me) of cook to Trinity Hall and Caius College: and the generous creature has contrived, with the greatest delicacy imaginable, to send me a present of Cambridge brawn. What makes it the more extraordinary is, that the man never saw me in his life that I know of. I suppose he has *heard* of me. I did not immediately recognise the donor; but one of Richard's cards, which had accidentally fallen into the straw, detected him in a moment. Dick, you know, was always remarkable for flourishing. His card imports, that "orders (to wit, for brawn) from any part of England, Scotland, or Ireland, will be duly executed," etc. At first, I thought of declining the present; but Richard knew my blind side when he pitched upon brawn. 'Tis of all my hobbies the supreme in the eating way. He might have sent sops from the pan, skimmings, crumpets, chips, hog's lard, the tender brown judiciously scalped from a fillet of veal (dexterously replaced by a salamander), the tops of asparagus, fugitive livers, runaway gizzards of fowls, the eyes of martyred pigs, tender effusions of laxative woodcocks, the red spawn of lobsters, leverets' ears, and such pretty filchings common to cooks; but these had

been ordinary presents, the everyday courtesies of dish-washers to their sweethearts. Brawn was a noble thought. It is not every common gullet-fancier that can properly esteem it. It is like a picture of one of the choice old Italian masters. Its gusto is of that hidden sort. As Wordsworth sings of a modest poet,—"you must love him, ere to you he will seem worthy of your love"; so brawn, you must taste it ere to you it will seem to have any taste at all. But 'tis nuts to the adept: those that will send out their tongue and feelers to find it out. It will be wooed, and not unsought be won. Now, ham-essence, lobsters, turtle, such popular minions, absolutely *court you*, lay themselves out to strike you at first smack, like one of David's pictures (they call him *Darveed*) compared with the plain russet-coated wealth of a Titian or a Correggio, as I illustrated above. Such are the obvious glaring heathen virtues of a corporation dinner, compared with the reserved collegiate worth of brawn. Do me the favour to leave off the business which you may be at present upon, and go immediately to the kitchens of Trinity and Caius, and make my most respectful compliments to Mr. Richard Hopkins, and assure him that his brawn is most excellent; and that I am moreover obliged to him for his innuendo about salt water and bran, which I shall not fail to improve. I leave it to you whether you shall choose to pay him the civility of asking him to

dinner while you stay in Cambridge, or in whatever other way you may best like to show your gratitude to *my friend.* Richard Hopkins, considered in many points of view, is a very extraordinary character. Adieu. I hope to see you to supper in London soon, where we will taste Richard's brawn, and drink his health in a cheerful but moderate cup. We have not many such men in any rank of life as Mr. R. Hopkins. Crisp, the barber, of St. Mary's was just such another. I wonder *he* never sent me any little token, some chestnuts, or a puff, or two pound of hair: just to remember him by. Gifts are like nails. *Præsens ut absens;* that is, your *present* makes amends for your absence.

Yours, C. LAMB.

To MISS WORDSWORTH

LETTER CXXIV.] *June* 14, 1805.

My dear Miss Wordsworth—Your long kind letter has not been thrown away (for it has given me great pleasure to find you are all resuming your old occupations, and are better); but poor Mary, to whom it is addressed, cannot yet relish it. She has been attacked by one of her severe illnesses, and is at present *from home.* Last Monday week was the day she left me, and I hope I may calculate upon having her again in a

month or little more. I am rather afraid late hours have in this case contributed to her indisposition. But when she discovers symptoms of approaching illness, it is not easy to say what is best to do. Being by ourselves is bad, and going out is bad. I get so irritable and wretched with fear, that I constantly hasten on the disorder. You cannot conceive the misery of such a foresight. I am sure that, for the week before she left me, I was little better than light-headed. I now am calm, but sadly taken down and flat. I have every reason to suppose that this illness, like all her former ones, will be but temporary; but I cannot always feel so. Meantime she is dead to me, and I miss a prop. All my strength is gone, and I am like a fool, bereft of her co-operation. I dare not think, lest I should think wrong; so used am I to look up to her in the least and the biggest perplexity. To say all that I know of her would be more than I think anybody could believe, or even understand; and when I hope to have her well again with me, it would be sinning against her feelings to go about to praise her; for I can conceal nothing that I do from her. She is older and wiser and better than I, and all my wretched imperfections I cover to myself by resolutely thinking on her goodness. She would share life and death, heaven and hell, with me. She lives but for me; and I know I have been wasting and teasing her life for five years past incessantly with my cursed

drinking and ways of going on. But even in this upbraiding of myself I am offending against her, for I know that she has cleaved to me for better, for worse; and if the balance has been against her hitherto, it was a noble trade. I am stupid, and lose myself in what I write. I write rather what answers to my feelings (which are sometimes sharp enough) than express my present ones, for I am only flat and stupid. I am sure you will excuse my writing any more, I am so very poorly.

I cannot resist transcribing three or four lines which poor Mary made upon a picture (a Holy Family) which we saw at an auction only one week before she left home. She was then beginning to show signs of ill boding. They are sweet lines and upon a sweet picture; but I send them only as the latest memorial of her.

"VIRGIN AND CHILD, L. DA VINCI.

"Maternal Lady, with thy virgin grace,
Heaven-born, thy Jesus seemeth sure,
And thou a virgin pure.
Lady most perfect, when thy angel face
Men look upon, they wish to be
A Catholic, Madonna fair, to worship thee."

You had her lines about the "Lady Blanch." You have not had some which she wrote upon a copy of a girl from Titian, which I had hung up where that print of Blanch and the Abbess (as she beautifully interpreted two female figures from

L. da Vinci) had hung in our room. 'Tis light and pretty :—

"Who art thou, fair one, who usurp'st the place
Of Blanch, the lady of the matchless grace?
Come, fair and pretty, tell to me
Who in thy lifetime thou mightst be?
Thou pretty art and fair,
But with the Lady Blanch thou never must compare.
No need for Blanch her history to tell,
Whoever saw her face, they there did read it well;
But when I look on thee, I only know
There lived a pretty maid some hundred years ago."

This is a little unfair, to tell so much about ourselves, and to advert so little to your letter, so full of comfortable tidings of you all. But my own cares press pretty close upon me, and you can make allowance. That you may go on gathering strength and peace is my next wish to Mary's recovery.

I had almost forgot your repeated invitation. Supposing that Mary will be well and able, there is another *ability* which you may guess at, which I cannot promise myself. In prudence we ought not to come. This illness will make it still more prudential to wait. It is not a balance of this way of spending our money against another way, but an absolute question of whether we shall stop now, or go on wasting away the little we have got beforehand, which my wise conduct has already encroach'd upon one half. My best love, however, to you all; and to that most

friendly creature, Mrs. Clarkson, and better health to her, when you see or write to her.

CHARLES LAMB.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CXXV.] [*July* 27, 1805.]

Dear Archimedes—Things have gone on badly with thy ungeometrical friend; but they are on the turn. My old housekeeper has shown signs of convalescence, and will shortly resume the power of the keys, so I shan't be cheated of my tea and liquors. Wind in the West, which promotes tranquillity. Have leisure now to anticipate seeing thee again. Have been taking leave of tobacco in a rhyming address. Had thought *that vein* had long since closed up. Find I can rhyme and reason too. Think of studying mathematics, to restrain the fire of my genius, which G. D. recommends. Have frequent bleedings at the nose, which shows plethoric. Maybe shall try the sea myself, that great scene of wonders. Got incredibly sober and regular; shave oftener, and hum a tune, to signify cheerfulness and gallantry.

Suddenly disposed to sleep, having taken a quart of pease with bacon and stout. Will not refuse Nature, who has done such things for me!

TO WORDSWORTH

Nurse! don't call me unless Mr. Manning comes.—What! the gentleman in spectacles? —Yes.

Dormit. C. L.

Saturday,
Hot Noon.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CXXVI.] *September* 28, 1805.

My dear Wordsworth (or Dorothy rather, for to you appertains the biggest part of this answer by right)—I will not again deserve reproach by so long a silence. I have kept deluding myself with the idea that Mary would write to you, but she is so lazy (or, which I believe is the true state of the case, so diffident), that it must revert to me as usual. Though she writes a pretty good style, and has some notion of the force of words, she is not always so certain of the true orthography of them; and that, and a poor handwriting (in this age of female calligraphy), often deters her, where no other reason does.

We have neither of us been very well for some weeks past. I am very nervous, and she most so at those times when I am; so that a merry friend, adverting to the noble consolation we were able to afford each other, denominated

us, not unaptly, Gum-boil and Tooth-Ache, for they used to say that a gum-boil is a great relief to a tooth-ache.

We have been two tiny excursions this Summer, for three or four days each, to a place near Harrow, and to Egham, where Cooper's Hill is: and that is the total history of our rustications this year. Alas! how poor a round to Skiddaw and Helvellyn, and Borrowdale, and the magnificent sesquipedalia of the year 1802! Poor old Molly! to have lost her pride, that "last infirmity of noble minds," and her cow. Fate need not have set her wits to such an old Molly. I am heartily sorry for her. Remember us lovingly to her; and in particular remember us to Mrs. Clarkson in the most kind manner.

I hope, by "southwards," you mean that she will be at or near London, for she is a great favourite of both of us, and we feel for her health as much as possible for any one to do. She is one of the friendliest, comfortablest women we know, and made our little stay at your cottage one of the pleasantest times we ever past. We were quite strangers to her. Mr. C. is with you too; our kindest separate remembrances to him. As to our special affairs, I am looking about me. I have done nothing since the beginning of last year, when I lost my newspaper job; and having had a long idleness, I must do something, or we shall get very poor. Sometimes I think of a farce, but hitherto all

schemes have gone off; an idle brag or two of an evening, vapouring out of a pipe, and going off in the morning; but now I have bid farewell to my "sweet enemy," Tobacco, I shall perhaps set nobly to work. Hang work!

I wish that all the year were holiday; I am sure that indolence—indefeasible indolence—is the true state of man, and business the invention of the old Teazer, whose interference doomed Adam to an apron and set him a hoeing. Pen and ink, and clerks and desks, were the refinements of this old torturer some thousand years after, under pretence of "Commerce allying distant shores, promoting and diffusing knowledge, good," etc. etc.

I wish you may think this a handsome farewell to my "Friendly Traitress." Tobacco has been my evening comfort and my morning curse for these five years; and you know how difficult it is from refraining to pick one's lips even, when it has become a habit. This poem is the only one which I have finished since so long as when I wrote "Hester Savory." I have had it in my head to do it these two years, but tobacco stood in its own light when it gave me headaches that prevented my singing its praises. Now you have got it, you have got all my store, for I have absolutely not another line. No more has Mary. We have nobody about us that cares for poetry; and who will rear grapes when he shall be the sole eater? Perhaps if

you encourage us to show you what we may write, we may do something now and then before we absolutely forget the quantity of an English line for want of practice. The "Tobacco," being a little in the way of Wither (whom Southey so much likes), perhaps you will somehow convey it to him with my kind remembrances. Then, everybody will have seen it that I wish to see it, I having sent it to Malta.

I remain, dear W. and D., yours truly,

C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM HAZLITT

LETTER CXXVII.] *November* 10, 1805.

Dear Hazlitt—I was very glad to hear from you, and that your journey was so *picturesque*. We miss you, as we foretold we should. One or two things have happened, which are beneath the dignity of epistolary communication, but which, seated about our fireside at night (the winter hands of pork have begun), gesture and emphasis might have talked into some importance. Something about Rickman's wife; for instance, how tall she is, and that she visits pranked up like a Queen of the May, with green streamers: a good-natured woman though, which is as much as you can expect from a

friend's wife, whom you got acquainted with a bachelor. Some things too about Monkey, which can't so well be written: how it set up for a fine lady, and thought it had got lovers, and was obliged to be convinced of its age from the parish register, where it was proved to be only twelve; and an edict issued, that it should not give itself airs yet these four years; and how it got leave to be called Miss, by grace; these, and such like hows, were in my head to tell you; but who can write? Also how Manning is come to town in spectacles, and studies physic; is melancholy, and seems to have something in his head, which he don't impart. Then, how I am going to leave off smoking. O la! your Leonardos of Oxford made my mouth water. I was hurried through the gallery, and they escaped me. What do I say? I was a Goth then, and should not have noticed them. I had not settled my notions of beauty: I have now for ever!—the small head, the long eye,—that sort of peering curve,—the wicked Italian mischief; the stick-at-nothing, Herodias's daughter kind of grace. You understand me? But you disappoint me in passing over in absolute silence the Blenheim Leonardo. Didn't you see it? Excuse a lover's curiosity. I have seen no pictures of note since, except Mr. Dawe's gallery. It is curious to see how differently two great men treat the same subject, yet both excellent in their way. For instance, Milton

and Mr. Dawe. Mr. D. has chosen to illustrate the story of Samson exactly in the point of view in which Milton has been most happy: the interview between the Jewish hero, blind and captive, and Delilah. Milton has imagined his locks grown again, strong as horse-hair or porcupine's bristles; doubtless shaggy and black, as being hairs "which, of a nation armed, contained the strength." I don't remember he *says* black; but could Milton imagine them to be yellow? Do you? Mr. Dawe, with striking originality of conception, has crowned him with a thin yellow wig, in colour precisely like Dyson's; in curl and quantity, resembling Mrs. Professor's; his limbs rather stout,—about such a man as my brother or Rickman,—but no Atlas nor Hercules, nor yet so long as Dubois, the clown of Sadler's Wells. This was judicious, taking the spirit of the story rather than the fact; for doubtless God could communicate national salvation to the trust of flax and tow as well as hemp and cordage, and could draw down a temple with a golden tress as soon as with all the cables of the British navy.

Wasn't you sorry for Lord Nelson? I have followed him in fancy ever since I saw him walking in Pall Mall (I was prejudiced against him before), looking just as a hero should look; and I have been very much cut about it indeed. He was the only pretence of a great man we had. Nobody is left of any name at all. His secretary

died by his side. I imagined him a Mr. Scott, to be the man you met at Hume's; but I learnt from Mrs. Hume that it is not the same. I met Mrs. H. one day, and agreed to go on the Sunday to tea, but the rain prevented us, and the distance. I have been to apologise, and we are to dine there the first fine Sunday. Strange perverseness! I never went while you stayed here; and now I *go to find you!* What other news is there, Mary? What puns have I made in the last fortnight? You never remember them. You have no relish for the comic. "Oh! tell Hazlitt not to forget to send the *American Farmer*. I daresay it is not so good as he fancies; but a book's a book." I have not heard from Wordsworth or from Malta since. Charles Kemble, it seems, enters into possession to-morrow. We sup at 109 Russell Street, this evening. I wish your brother would not drink. 'Tis a blemish in the greatest characters. You send me a modern quotation poetical. How do you like this in an old play? Vittoria Corombona, a spunky Italian lady, a Leonardo one, nicknamed the White Devil, being on her trial for murder, etc.—and questioned about seducing a duke from his wife and the state, makes answer:—

> "Condemn you me for that the Duke did love me?
> So may you blame some fair and crystal river,
> For that some melancholic distracted man
> Hath drown'd himself in it."

N.B.—I shall expect a line from you, if but

a bare line, whenever you write to Russell Street, and a letter often when you do not. I pay no postage ; but I will have consideration for you until Parliament time and franks. Luck to Ned Search, and the new art of colouring. Monkey sends her love ; and Mary especially.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CXXVIII.] [*November* 15, 1805.]

Dear Manning — Certainly you could not have called at all hours from two till ten, for we have been only out of an evening Monday and Tuesday in this week. But if you think you have, your thought shall go for the deed. We did pray for you on Wednesday night. Oysters unusually luscious ; pearls of extraordinary magnitude found in them. I have made bracelets of them ; given them in clusters to ladies. Last night we went out in despite, because you were not come at your hour.

This night we shall be at home ; so shall we certainly, both, on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Take your choice, mind I don't say of one : but choose which evening you will not come, and come the other four. Doors open at five o'clock. Shells forced about nine. Every gentleman smokes or not as he pleases.

C. L.

To WILLIAM HAZLITT

LETTER CXXIX.] *January* 15, 1806.

Dear Hazlitt—Godwin went to Johnson's yesterday about your business. Johnson would not come down, or give any answer, but has promised to open the manuscript, and to give you an answer in one month. Godwin will punctually go again (Wednesday is Johnson's open day) yesterday four weeks next: *i.e.* in one lunar month from this time; till when, Johnson positively declines giving any answer. I wish you joy on ending your Search. Mrs. H. was naming something about a "Life of Fawcett," to be by you undertaken: the great Fawcett, as she explained to Manning, when he asked, "*What Fawcett?*" He innocently thought *Fawcett the Player*. But Fawcett the divine is known to many people, albeit unknown to the Chinese inquirer. I should think, if you liked it, and Johnson declined it, that Phillips is the man. He is perpetually bringing out biographies,—Richardson, Wilks, Foot, Lee Lewes,—without number: little trim things in two easy volumes, price 12s. the two, made up of letters to and from, scraps, posthumous trifles, anecdotes, and about forty pages of hard biography. You might dish up a Fawcettiad in three months, and ask £60 or £80 for it. I should dare say that Phillips would catch at it. I wrote to you

the other day in a great hurry. Did you get it? This is merely a letter of business at Godwin's request. Lord Nelson is quiet at last. His ghost only keeps a slight fluttering in odes and elegies in newspapers, and impromptus, which could not be got ready before the funeral.

As for news, Fenwick is coming to town on Monday (if no kind angel intervene) to surrender himself to prison. He hopes to get the rules of the Fleet. On the same, or nearly the same day, Fell, my other quondam co-friend and drinker, will go to Newgate, and his wife and four children, I suppose, to the parish. Plenty of reflection and motives of gratitude to the wise Disposer of all things in *us*, whose prudent conduct has hitherto ensured us a warm fire and snug roof over our heads. *Nullum numen abest si sit Prudentia.* Alas! Prudentia is in the last quarter of her tutelary shining over me. A little time and I ——; but maybe I may, at last, hit upon some mode of collecting some of the vast superfluities of this money-voiding town. Much is to be got, and I do not want much. All I ask is time and leisure; and I am cruelly off for them. When you have the inclination, I shall be very glad to have a letter from you. Your brother and Mrs. H., I am afraid, think hardly of us for not coming oftener to see them; but we are distracted beyond what they can conceive with visitors and visitings. I never have an hour for my head to work quietly its own

workings; which you know is as necessary to the human system as sleep. Sleep, too, I can't get for these winds of a night: and without sleep and rest what should ensue? Lunacy. But I trust it won't.

Yours, dear H., C. LAMB.

To Mr. RICKMAN

LETTER CXXX.] *January* 25, 1806.

Dear Rickman—You do not happen to have any place at your disposal which would suit a decayed Literatus? I do not much expect that you have, or that you will go much out of the way to serve the object, when you hear it is Fell. But the case is, by a *mistaking* of his *turn*, as they call it, he is reduced, I am afraid, to extremities, and would be extremely glad of a place in an office. Now it does sometimes happen, that just as a man wants a place, a place wants him; and though this is a lottery to which none but G. Burnett would choose to trust his all, there is no harm just to call in at Despair's office for a friend, and see if *his* number is come up (Burnett's further case I enclose by way of episode). Now, if you should happen, or anybody you know, to want a *hand*, here is a young man of solid but not brilliant genius, who would turn his hand to the making out of dockets,

penning a manifesto, or scoring a tally, not the worse (I hope) for knowing Latin and Greek, and having in youth conversed with the philosophers. But from these follies I believe he is thoroughly awakened, and would bind himself by a terrible oath never to imagine himself an extraordinary genius again.

Yours, etc., C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM HAZLITT

LETTER CXXXI.] *February* 19, 1806.

Dear H.—Godwin has just been here in his way from Johnson's. Johnson has had a fire in his house; this happened about five weeks ago; it was in the daytime, so it did not burn the house down, but it did so much damage that the house must come down, to be repaired. His nephew that we met on Hampstead Hill put it out. Well, this fire has put him so back, that he craves one more month before he gives you an answer. I will certainly goad Godwin (if necessary) to go again this very day four weeks; but I am confident he will want no goading. Three or four most capital auctions of pictures are advertised: in May, *Wellbore Ellis Agar's*, the first private collection in England, so Holcroft says; in March, Sir George Young's in Stratford Place (where Cosway lives), and a Mr. Hulse's

at Blackheath, both very capital collections, and have been announced for some months. Also the Marquis of Lansdowne's pictures in March; and though inferior to mention, lastly, the Tructhsessian Gallery. Don't your mouth water to be here? T'other night Loftus called, whom we have not seen since you went before. We meditate a stroll next Wednesday, fast-day. He happened to light upon Mr. Holcroft, wife, and daughter, their first visit at our house. Your brother called last night. We keep up our intimacy. He is going to begin a large Madonna and child from Mrs. H. and baby. I fear he goes astray after *ignes fatui*. He is a clever man. By the by, I saw a miniature of his as far excelling any in his show cupboard (that of your sister not excepted) as that show cupboard excels the show things you see in windows — an old woman (damn her name!), but most superlative; he has it to clean — I'll ask him the name — but the best miniature I ever saw. But for oil pictures! — what has he to do with Madonnas? If the Virgin Mary were alive and visitable, he would not hazard himself in a Covent Garden pit-door crowd to see her. It isn't his style of beauty, is it? But he will go on painting things he ought not to paint, and not painting things he ought to paint. Manning is not gone to China, but talks of going this Spring. God forbid! Coleridge not heard of. I am going to leave off smoke. In the meantime I am so smoky with

last night's ten pipes, that I must leave off. Mary begs her kind remembrances. Pray write to us. This is no letter; but I supposed you grew anxious about Johnson.

N.B.—Have taken a room at three shillings a week, to be in between five and eight at night, to avoid my *nocturnal*, alias *knock-eternal*, visitors. The first-fruits of my retirement has been a farce, which goes to manager to-morrow. *Wish my ticket luck.* God bless you; and do write.—Yours, *fumosissimus*, C. LAMB.

To MR. RICKMAN

LETTER CXXXII.] *March* 1806.

Dear Rickman—I send you some papers about a salt-water soap, for which the inventor is desirous of getting a parliamentary reward, like Dr. Jenner. Whether such a project be feasible, I mainly doubt, taking for granted the equal utility. I should suppose the usual way of paying such projectors is by patent and contracts. The patent, you see, he has got. A contract he is about with the Navy Board. Meantime, the projector is hungry. Will you answer me two questions, and return them with the papers as soon as you can? Imprimis, is there any chance of success in application to Parliament for a reward? Did you ever hear of the invention? You see its

benefits and saving to the nation (always the first motive with a true projector) are feelingly set forth: the last paragraph but one of the estimate, in enumerating the shifts poor seamen are put to, even approaches to the pathetic. But, agreeing to all he says, is there the remotest chance of Parliament giving the projector anything? And *when* should application be made, now, or after a report (if he can get it) from the Navy Board? Secondly, let the infeasibility be as great as you will, you will oblige me by telling me the way of introducing such an application in Parliament, without buying over a majority of members, which is totally out of projector's power. I vouch nothing for the soap myself; for I always wash in *fresh water*, and find it answer tolerably well for all purposes of cleanliness; nor do I know the projector; but a relation of mine has put me on writing to you, for whose parliamentary knowledge he has great veneration.

P.S. — The Capt. and Mrs. Burney and Phillips take their chance at cribbage here on Wednesday. Will you and Mrs. R. join the party. Mary desires her compliments to Mrs. R., and joins in the invitation.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM HAZLITT

LETTER CXXXIII.] *March* 15, 1806.

Dear H.—I am a little surprised at no letter from you. This day week, to wit, Saturday, the 8th of March, 1806, I booked off by the Wem coach, Bull and Mouth Inn, directed to *you*, at the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt's, Wem, Shropshire, a parcel containing, besides a book, etc., a rare print, which I take to be a Titian; begging the said W. H. to acknowledge the receipt thereof; which he not having done, I conclude the said parcel to be lying at the inn, and may be lost; for which reason, lest you may be a Wales-hunting at this instant, I have authorised any of your family, whosoever first gets this, to open it, that so precious a parcel may not moulder away for want of looking after.

What do you in Shropshire when so many fine pictures are a-going a-going every day in London? Monday I visit the Marquis of Lansdowne's, in Berkeley Square. Catalogue 2s. 6d. Leonardos in plenty. Some other day this week I go to see Sir Wm. Young's, in Stratford Place. Hulse's, of Blackheath, are also to be sold this month; and in May, the first private collection in Europe, Welbore Ellis Agar's. And there are you, perverting Nature in lying landscapes, filched from old rusty

Titians, such as I can scrape up here to send you, with an additament from Shropshire Nature thrown in to make the whole look unnatural. I am afraid of your mouth watering when I tell you that Manning and I got into Angerstein's on Wednesday. *Mon Dieu!* Such Claudes! Four Claudes bought for more than £10,000; (those who talk of Wilson being equal to Claude are either mainly ignorant or stupid;) one of these was perfectly miraculous. What colours short of *bonâ fide* sunbeams it could be painted in, I am not earthly colourman enough to say; but I did not think it had been in the possibility of things. Then, a music piece by Titian, a thousand-pound picture, five figures standing behind a piano, the sixth playing—none of the heads, as M. observed, indicating great men, or affecting it, but so sweetly disposed—all leaning separate ways, but so easy—like a flock of some divine shepherd; the colouring, like the economy of the picture, so sweet and harmonious—as good as Shakspeare's *Twelfth Night,—almost*, that is. It will give you a love of order, and cure you of restless, fidgety passions for a week after—more musical than the music which it would, but cannot, yet in a manner *does*, show. I have no room for the rest. Let me say, Angerstein sits in a room—his study (only that and the library are shown), when he writes a common letter, as I am doing, surrounded with twenty pictures worth £60,000.

What a luxury! Apicius and Heliogabalus, hide your diminished heads!

Yours, my dear painter, C. LAMB.

Mr. Wm. Hazlitt,
Wem, Shropshire.
In his absence, to be opened immediately.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CXXXIV.] *May* 10, 1806.

My dear Manning—I didn't know what your going was till I shook a last fist with you, and then 'twas just like having shaken hands with a wretch on the fatal scaffold, for when you are down the ladder you can never stretch out to him again. Mary says you are dead, and there's nothing to do but to leave it to time to do for us in the end what it always does for those who mourn for people in such a case. But she'll see by your letter you are not quite dead. A little kicking and agony, and then ——. Martin Burney *took me out* a walking that evening, and we talked of Manning; and then I came home and smoked for you; and at twelve o'clock came home Mary and Monkey Louisa from the play, and there was more talk and more smoking, and they all seemed first-rate characters, because they knew a certain person. But what's the use of talking about 'em? By

the time you'll have made your escape from the Kalmuks, you'll have stayed so long I shall never be able to bring to your mind who Mary was, who will have died about a year before, nor who the Holcrofts were ! Me perhaps you will mistake for Phillips, or confound me with Mr. Dawe, because you saw us together. Mary (whom you seem to remember yet) is not quite easy that she had not a formal parting from you. I wish it had so happened. But you must bring her a token, a shawl or something, and remember a sprightly little mandarin for our mantelpiece, as a companion to the child I am going to purchase at the museum. She says you saw her writings about the other day, and she wishes you should know what they are. She is doing for Godwin's bookseller twenty of Shakspeare's plays, to be made into children's tales. Six are already done by her ; to wit, the *Tempest*, the *Winter's Tale*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Cymbeline*. The *Merchant of Venice* is in forwardness. I have done *Othello* and *Macbeth*, and mean to do all the tragedies. I think it will be popular among the little people, besides money. It is to bring in sixty guineas. Mary has done them capitally, I think you'd think. These are the humble amusements we propose, while you are gone to plant the cross of Christ among barbarous pagan anthropophagi. Quam homo homini præstat ! but then,

perhaps, you'll get murdered, and we shall die in our beds with a fair literary reputation. Be sure, if you see any of those people whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders, that you make a draught of them. It will be very curious. Oh Manning, I am serious to sinking almost, when I think that all those evenings which you have made so pleasant, are gone perhaps for ever. Four years, you talk of, may be ten, and you may come back and find such alterations! Some circumstances may grow up to you or to me, that may be a bar to the return of any such intimacy. I daresay all this is hum! and that all will come back; but indeed we die many deaths before we die, and I am almost sick when I think that such a hold as I had of you is gone. I have friends, but some of 'em are changed. Marriage, or some circumstance, rises up to make them not the same. But I felt sure of you. And that last token you gave me of expressing a wish to have my name joined with yours, you know not how it affected me: like a legacy.

God bless you in every way you can form a wish. May He give you health, and safety, and the accomplishment of all your objects, and return you again to us, to gladden some fireside or other (I suppose we shall be moved from the Temple). I will nurse the remembrance of your steadiness and quiet, which used to infuse something like itself into our nervous minds.

Mary called you our ventilator. Farewell, and take her best wishes and mine.

Good-bye. C. L.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CXXXV.] *June* 26, 1806.

Mary is just stuck fast in "All's Well that Ends Well." She complains of having to set forth so many female characters in boys' clothes. She begins to think Shakspeare must have wanted —imagination! I, to encourage her (for she often faints in the prosecution of her great work), flatter her with telling her how well such a play and such a play is done. But she is stuck fast, and I have been obliged to promise to assist her. To do this it will be necessary to leave off tobacco. But I had some thoughts of doing that before, for I sometimes think it does not agree with me. Wm. Hazlitt is in town. I took him to see a very pretty girl, professedly, where there were two young girls (the very head and sum of the girlery was two young girls); they neither laughed, nor sneered, nor giggled, nor whispered —but they were young girls—and he sat and frowned blacker and blacker, indignant that there should be such a thing as youth and beauty, till he tore me away before supper, in perfect misery, and owned he could not bear young girls; they

drove him mad. So I took him home to my old nurse, where he recovered perfect tranquillity. Independent of this, and as I am not a young girl myself, he is a great acquisition to us. He is, rather imprudently I think, printing a political pamphlet on his own account, and will have to pay for the paper, etc. The first duty of an author, I take it, is never to pay anything. But *non cuivis contigit adire Corinthum.* The managers, I thank my stars, have settled that question for me.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CXXXVI.] *June* 1806.

Dear Wordsworth—We are pleased, you may be sure, with the good news of Mrs. W——. Hope all is well over by this time. "A fine boy. Have you any more?—one more and a girl—poor copies of me!" vide *Mr. H.*, a farce which the proprietors have done me the honour ——; but I will set down Mr. Wroughton's own words. *N.B.*—The ensuing letter was sent in answer to one which I wrote, begging to know if my piece had any chance, as I might make alterations, etc. I writing on Monday, there comes this letter on the Wednesday. Attend!

[Copy of a Letter from Mr. R. Wroughton.]

"Sir—Your piece of *Mr. H.*, I am desired to say, is accepted at Drury Lane Theatre, by

the proprietors, and, if agreeable to you, will be brought forwards when the proper opportunity serves. The piece shall be sent to you, for your alterations, in the course of a few days, as the same is not in my hands, but with the proprietors.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"RICHARD WROUGHTON.

[Dated]
"66, Gower Street,
"Wednesday, June 11, 1806."

On the following Sunday Mr. Tobin comes. The scent of a manager's letter brought him. He would have gone further any day on such a business. I read the letter to him. He deems it authentic and peremptory. Our conversation naturally fell upon pieces, different sorts of pieces; what is the best way of offering a piece, how far the caprice of managers is an obstacle in the way of a piece, how to judge of the merits of a piece, how long a piece may remain in the hands of the managers before it is acted; and my piece, and your piece, and my poor brother's piece—my poor brother was all his life endeavouring to get a piece accepted. I am not sure that, when my poor brother bequeathed the care of his pieces to Mr. Tobin, he did not therein convey a legacy which in some measure mollified the otherwise first stupefactions of grief. It cannot be expected that

the present Earl Nelson passes all his time in watering the laurels of the admiral with Right-Reverend Tears. Certainly he steals a fine day now and then to plot how to lay out the grounds and mansion at Burnham most suitable to the late Earl's taste, if he had lived, and how to spend the hundred thousand pounds which Parliament has given him in erecting some little neat monument to his memory.

I wrote that in mere wantonness of triumph. Have nothing more to say about it. The managers, I thank my stars, have decided its merits for ever. They are the best judges of pieces, and it would be insensible in me to affect a false modesty after the very flattering letter which I have received.

ADMIT
TO
BOXES.
MR. H.
Ninth Night.
CHARLES LAMB.

I think this will be as good a pattern for orders as I can think on. A little thin flowery border, round, neat, not gaudy, and the Drury Lane Apollo, with the harp at the top. Or shall I have no Apollo?—simply nothing? Or perhaps the comic muse?

The same form, only I think without the Apollo, will serve for the pit and galleries. I think it will be best to write my name at full length; but then if I give away a great many, that will be tedious. Perhaps *Ch. Lamb* will do.

BOXES, now I think on it, I'll have in capitals. The rest, in a neat Italian hand. Or better, perhaps **Boxes**, in old English characters, like "Madoc" or "Thalaba"?

A-propos of Spenser (you will find him mentioned a page or two before, near enough for an *a-propos*), I was discoursing on poetry (as one's apt to deceive one's self, and when a person is willing to *talk* of what one likes, to believe that he also likes the same, as lovers do) with a young gentleman of my office, who is deep read in Anacreon Moore, Lord Strangford, and the principal modern poets, and I happened to mention Epithalamiums, and that I could show him a very fine one of Spenser's. At the mention of this, my gentleman, who is a very fine gentleman, and is brother to the Miss Evans whom Coleridge so narrowly escaped marrying, pricked up his ears and expressed great pleasure, and begged that I would give him leave to copy it: he did not care how long it was (for I objected the length), he should be very happy to see *anything by him.* Then pausing, and looking sad, he ejaculated "POOR SPENCER!" I begged to know the reason of his ejaculation, thinking that time had by this time softened

down any calamities which the bard might have endured. "Why, poor fellow," said he, "he has lost his wife!" "Lost his wife!" said I, "whom are you talking of?" "Why, Spencer," said he; "I've read the *Monody* he wrote on the occasion, and *a very pretty thing it is*." This led to an explanation (it could be delayed no longer) that the sound *Spenser*, which, when poetry is talked of, generally excites an image of an old bard in a ruff, and sometimes with it dim notions of Sir P. Sydney, and perhaps Lord Burleigh, had raised in my gentleman a quite contrary image of the Honourable William Spencer, who has translated some things from the German very prettily, which are published with Lady Di. Beauclerk's designs. Nothing like defining of terms when we talk. What blunders might I have fallen into of quite inapplicable criticism, but for this timely explanation!

N.B.—At the beginning of *Edm.* Spenser (to prevent mistakes), I have copied from my own copy, and primarily from a book of Chalmers's on Shakspeare, a sonnet of Spenser's never printed among his poems. It is curious, as being manly, and rather Miltonic, and as a sonnet of Spenser's with nothing in it about love or knighthood. I have no room for remembrances; but I hope our doing your commission will prove we do not quite forget you.

C. L.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CXXXVII.] *December* 5, 1806.

Manning, your letter dated Hottentots, August (the what-was-it ?) came to hand. I can scarce hope that mine will have the same luck. China ! Canton ! Bless us—how it strains the imagination and makes it ache ! I write under another uncertainty, whether it can go to-morrow by a ship which I have just learned is going off direct to your part of the world, or whether the despatches may not be sealed up and this have to wait, for if it is detained here, it will grow staler in a fortnight than in a five months' voyage coming to you. It will be a point of conscience to send you none but bran-new news (the latest edition), which, like oranges, will but grow the better for a sea voyage. Oh that you should be so many hemispheres off !—if I speak incorrectly you can correct me—why the simplest death or marriage that takes place here must be important to you as news in the old Bastile. There's your friend Tuthill has got away from France ; you remember France ? and Tuthill ?—ten to one but he writes by this post, if he don't get my note in time, apprising him of the vessel's sailing. Know then that he has found means to obtain leave from Buonaparte (without making use of any *incredible romantic pretences* as some have done, who never meant

to fulfil them) to come home, and I have seen him here and at Holcroft's. Arn't you glad about Tuthill? Now then be sorry for Holcroft, whose new play, called the *Vindictive Man*, was damned about a fortnight since. It died in part of its own weakness, and in part for being choked up with bad actors. The two principal parts were destined to Mrs. Jordan and Mr. Bannister, but Mrs. J. has not come to terms with the managers; they have had some squabble; and Bannister shot some of his fingers off by the going off of a gun. So Miss Duncan had her part, and Mr. de Camp took his. His part, the principal comic hope of the play, was most unluckily *Goldfinch*, taken out of the *Road to Ruin*, not only the same character, but the identical *Goldfinch*—the same as *Falstaff* is in two plays of Shakspeare's. As the devil of ill-luck would have it, half the audience did not know that Holcroft had written it, but were displeased at his stealing from the *Road to Ruin;* and those who might have borne a gentlemanly coxcomb with his "That's your sort," "Go it" —such as Lewis is—did not relish the intolerable vulgarity and inanity of the idea stript of his manner. De Camp was hooted, more than hist, hooted and bellowed off the stage before the second act was finished; so that the remainder of his part was forced to be, with some violence to the play, omitted. In addition to this, a whore was another principal character—a most

unfortunate choice in this moral day. The audience were as scandalised as if you were to introduce such a personage to their private tea-tables. Besides, her action in the play was gross—wheedling an old man into marriage. But the mortal blunder of the play was that which, oddly enough, Holcroft took pride in, and exultingly told me of the night before it came out, that there were no less than eleven principal characters in it, and I believe he meant of the men only, for the play-bill expressed as much, not reckoning one woman, and one whore ; and true it was, for Mr. Powell, Mr. Raymond, Mr. Bartlett, Mr. H. Siddons, Mr. Barrymore, etc. etc., to the number of eleven, had all parts equally prominent, and there was as much of them in quantity and rank as of the hero and heroine—and most of them gentlemen who seldom appear but as the hero's friend in a farce, for a minute or two ; and here they all had their ten-minute speeches, and one of them gave the audience a serious account of how he was now a lawyer but had been a poet, and then a long enumeration of the inconveniences of authorship, rascally booksellers, reviewers, etc. ; which first set the audience a-gaping ; but I have said enough. You will be so sorry, that you will not think the best of me for my detail ; but news is news at Canton. Poor Holcroft I fear will feel the disappointment very seriously in a pecuniary light. From what I can learn

he has saved nothing. You and I were hoping one day that he had, but I fear he has nothing but his pictures and books, and a no very flourishing business, and to be obliged to part with his long-necked Guido that hangs opposite as you enter, and the game-piece that hangs in the back drawing-room, and all those Vandykes, etc.! God should temper the wind to the shorn connoisseur. I hope I need not say to you, that I feel for the weather-beaten author, and for all his household. I assure you his fate has soured a good deal the pleasure I should have otherwise taken in my own little farce being accepted, and I hope about to be acted: it is in rehearsal actually, and I expect it to come out next week. It is kept a sort of secret, and the rehearsals have gone on privately, lest by many folks knowing it, the story should come out, which would infallibly damn it. You remember I had sent it before you went. Wroughton read it, and was much pleased with it. I speedily got an answer. I took it to make alterations, and lazily kept it some months, then took courage and furbished it up in a day or two and took it. In less than a fortnight I heard the principal part was given to Elliston, who liked it and only wanted a prologue, which I have since done and sent, and I had a note the day before yesterday from the manager, Wroughton (bless his fat face! he is not a bad actor in some things), to say that I should be

summoned to the rehearsal after the next, which next was to be yesterday. I had no idea it was so forward. I have had no trouble, attended no reading or rehearsal, made no interest. What a contrast to the usual parade of authors! But it is peculiar to modesty to do all things without noise or pomp. I have some suspicion it will appear in public on Wednesday next, for Wroughton says in his note, it is so forward that if wanted it may come out next week, and a new melodrame is announced for every day till then; and "a new farce is in rehearsal," is put up in the bills. Now you'd like to know the subject. The title is *Mr. H.*, no more. How simple, how taking! A great H. sprawling over the play-bill and attracting eyes at every corner. The story is a coxcomb appearing at Bath, vastly rich—all the ladies dying for him—all bursting to know who he is; but he goes by no other name than Mr. H.—a curiosity like that of the dames of Strasburg about the man with the great nose. But I won't tell you any more about it. Yes, I will; but I can't give you an idea how I have done it. I'll just tell you that after much vehement admiration, when his true name comes out, "Hogsflesh," all the women shun him, avoid him, and not one can be found to change their name for him. That's the idea. How flat it is here—but how whimsical in the farce! And only think how hard upon me it is that the ship is despatched

to-morrow, and my triumph cannot be ascertained till the Wednesday after; but all China will ring of it by and by. *N.B.* (But this is a secret.) The Professor has got a tragedy coming out, with the young Roscius in it, in January next, as we say—January last it will be with you—and though it is a profound secret now, as all his affairs are, it cannot be much of one by the time you read this. However, don't let it go any further. I understand there are dramatic exhibitions in China. One would not like to be forestalled. Do you find in all this stuff I have written anything like those feelings which one should send my old adventuring friend, that is gone to wander among Tartars and may never come again? I don't; but your going away, and all about you, is a threadbare topic. I have worn it out with thinking: it has come to me when I have been dull with anything, till my sadness has seemed more to have come from it than to have introduced it. I want you, you don't know how much; but if I had you here in my European garret, we should but talk over such stuff as I have written—so. Those *Tales from Shakspeare* are near coming out, and Mary has begun a new work. Mr. Dawe is turned author; he has been in such a way lately—Dawe, the painter, I mean—he sits and stands about at Holcroft's and says nothing; then sighs and leans his head on his hand. I took him to be in love; but it seems he was only meditating a

work,—"The Life of Morland." The young man is not used to composition. Rickman and Captain Burney are well; they assemble at my house pretty regularly of a Wednesday—a new institution. Like other great men I have a public day, cribbage and pipes, with Phillips and noisy Martin.

Good God! what a bit only I've got left! How shall I squeeze all I know into this morsel! Coleridge is come home, and is going to turn lecturer on Taste at the Royal Institution. I shall get £200 from the theatre if *Mr. H.* has a good run, and I hope £100 for the copyright. Nothing if it fails; and there never was a more ticklish thing. The whole depends on the manner in which the name is brought out, which I value myself on, as a *chef-d'œuvre*. How the paper grows less and less! In less than two minutes I shall cease to talk to you, and you may rave to the great wall of China. *N.B.* Is there such a wall? Is it as big as old London Wall, by Bedlam? Have you met with a friend of mine, named Ball, at Canton! If you are acquainted, remember me kindly to him. May be you'll think I have not said enough of Tuthill and the Holcrofts. Tuthill is a noble fellow, as far as I can judge. The H.'s bear their disappointment pretty well, but indeed they are sadly mortified. Mrs. H. is cast down. It was well, if it were but on this account, that T. is come home. *N.B.* If my little thing don't succeed I shall easily

survive, having, as it were, compared to H.'s venture, but a sixteenth in the lottery. Mary and I are to sit next the orchestra in the pit, next the tweedledees. She remembers you. You are more to us than five hundred farces, clappings, etc.

Come back one day. C. LAMB.

To MISS STODDART

LETTER CXXXVIII.] *December* 11, 1806.

Don't mind this being a queer letter. I am in haste, and taken up by visitors, condolers, etc.

God bless you.

Dear Sarah—Mary is a little cut at the ill success of *Mr. H.*, which came out last night and *failed.* I know you'll be sorry, but never mind. We are determined not to be cast down. I am going to leave off tobacco, and then we must thrive. A smoking man must write smoky farces.

Mary is pretty well, but I persuaded her to let me write. We did not apprise you of the coming out of *Mr. H.* for fear of ill luck. You were much better out of the house. If it had taken, your partaking of our good luck would have been one of our greatest joys. As it is, we shall expect you at the time you mentioned.

But whenever you come you shall be most welcome.

God bless you, dear Sarah,

Yours most truly, C. L.

Mary is by no means unwell, but I made her let me write.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CXXXIX.] *December* 11, 1806.

Mary's love to all of you—I wouldn't let her write.

Dear Wordsworth—*Mr. H.* came out last night, and failed. I had many fears; the subject was not substantial enough. John Bull must have solider fare than a *letter*. We are pretty stout about it; have had plenty of condoling friends; but, after all, we had rather it should have succeeded. You will see the prologue in most of the morning papers. It was received with such shouts as I never witnessed to a prologue. It was attempted to be encored. How hard!—a thing I did merely as a task, because it was wanted, and set no great store by; and *Mr. H.!!* The number of friends we had in the house—my brother and I being in public offices, etc.—was astonishing, but they yielded at length to a few hisses.

A hundred hisses! (Damn the word, I write it like kisses—how different!)—a hundred hisses outweigh a thousand claps. The former come more directly from the heart. Well, 'tis withdrawn, and there is an end.

Better luck to us. C. LAMB.

[Turn over.]

P.S.—Pray, when any of you write to the Clarksons, give our kind loves, and say we shall not be able to come and see them at Christmas, as I shall have but a day or two, and tell them we bear our mortification pretty well.

To WILLIAM GODWIN

LETTER CXL.] 1806.

I repent. Can that God whom thy votaries say that thou hast demolished expect more? I did indite a splenetic letter, but did the black Hypocondria never gripe *thy* heart, till thou hast taken a friend for an enemy? The foul fiend Flibbertigibbet leads me over four-inched bridges, to course my own shadow for a traitor. There are certain positions of the moon, under which I counsel thee not to take anything written from this domicile as serious.

I rank thee with Alves,—*Latinè*, Helvetius, or any of his accursed crew? Thou art my

friend, and henceforth my philosopher. Thou shalt teach Distinction to the junior branches of my household and Deception to the gray-haired Janitress at my door.

What! Are these atonements? Can Arcadias be brought upon knees, creeping and crouching?

Come, as Macbeth's drunken porter says, knock, knock, knock, knock, knock, knock, knock—seven times a day shalt thou batter at my peace, and if I shut aught against thee, save the Temple of Janus, may Briareus, with his hundred hands, in each a brass knocker, lead me such a life. C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CXLI.] *Thursday, January* 29, 1807.

Dear Wordsworth—We have book'd off from Swan and Two Necks, Lad Lane, this day (per Coach) the Tales from Shakspeare. You will forgive the plates, when I tell you they were left to the direction of Godwin, who left the choice of subjects to the bad Baby, who from mischief (I suppose) has chosen one from damn'd beastly vulgarity (vide *Merch. Venice*) where no atom of authority was in the tale to justify it; to another has given a name which exists not in the tale, Nic Bottom, and which she thought would be funny, though in this

I suspect *his* hand, for I guess her reading does not reach far enough to know Bottom's Christian name; and one of Hamlet and grave-digging, a scene which is not hinted at in the story, and you might as well have put King Canute the Great reproving his courtiers. The rest are giants and giantesses. Suffice it, to save our taste and damn our folly, that we left it all to a friend, W. G., who in the first place cheated me into putting a name to them, which I did not mean, but do not repent, and then wrote a puff about their *simplicity*, etc., to go with the advertisement as in my name! Enough of this egregious dupery. I will try to abstract the load of teasing circumstances from the stories and tell you that I am answerable for *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Timon*, *Romeo*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, for occasionally a tailpiece or correction of grammar, for none of the cuts and all of the spelling. The rest is my Sister's.——We think Pericles of hers the best, and Othello of mine; but I hope all have some good. *As You Like It*, we like least. So much, only begging you to tear out the cuts and give them to Johnny, as "Mrs. Godwin's fancy"!!— C. L.

Our love to all.

I had almost forgot, My part of the Preface begins in the middle of a sentence, in last but one page, after a colon, thus—

:—*which if they be happily so done, etc.*

The former part hath a more feminine turn and does hold me up something as an instructor to young ladies: but upon my modesty's honour I wrote it not.

Godwin told my Sister that the Baby chose the subjects: a fact in taste.

To Rev. W. HAZLITT

Letter CXLII.] *Temple, February* 18, 1808.

Sir—I am truly concerned that any mistake of mine should have caused you uneasiness, but I hope we have got a clue to William's absence, which may clear up all apprehensions. The people where he lodges in town have received direction from him to forward some linen to a place called Winterslow, in the county of Wilts (not far from Salisbury), where the lady lives, whose cottage, pictured upon a card, if you opened my letter you have doubtless seen; and though we have had no explanation of the mystery since, we shrewdly suspect that at the time of writing that letter which has given you all this trouble, a certain son of yours (who is both painter and author) was at her elbow, and did assist in framing that very cartoon which was sent to amuse and mislead us in town, as to the real place of his destination. And some words at the back of the said cartoon, which we had not

marked so narrowly before, by the similarity of the handwriting to William's, do very much confirm the suspicion. If our theory be right, they have had the pleasure of their jest, and I am afraid you have paid for it in anxiety. But I hope your uneasiness will now be removed, and you will pardon a suspense occasioned by LOVE, who does so many worse mischiefs every day.

The letter to the people where William lodges says, moreover, that he shall be in town in a fortnight.

My sister joins in respects to you and Mrs. Hazlitt, and in our kindest remembrances and wishes for the restoration of Peggy's health.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

CH. LAMB.

Rev. W. Hazlitt, Wem, Shropshire.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CXLIII.] *February* 26, 1808.

Dear Missionary — Your letters from the farthest ends of the world have arrived safe. Mary is very thankful for your remembrance of her; and with the less suspicion of mercenariness, as the silk, the *symbolum materiale* of your friendship, has not yet appeared. I think Horace says somewhere, *nox longa*. I would not impute negligence or unhandsome delays to a

person whom you have honoured with your confidence, but I have not heard of the silk, or of Mr. Knox, save by your letter. Maybe he expects the first advances! or it may be that he has not succeeded in getting the article on shore, for it is among the *res prohibitæ et non nisi smuggle-ationis viâ fruendæ*. But so it is, in the friendships between *wicked men* the very expressions of their goodwill cannot but be sinful. I suppose you know my farce was damned. The noise still rings in my ears. Were you ever in the pillory?—being damned is something like that. A treaty of marriage is on foot between William Hazlitt and Miss Stoddart. Something about settlements only retards it. She has somewhere about £80 a year, to be £120 when her mother dies. He has no settlement except what he can claim from the Parish. *Pauper est Cinna, sed amat.* The thing is therefore in abeyance. But there is love a-both sides. Little Fenwick (you don't see the connection of ideas here; how the devil should you?) is in the rules of the Fleet. Cruel creditors! operation of iniquitous laws. Is Magna Charta then a mockery? Why, in general (here I suppose you to ask a question) my spirits are pretty good; but I have my depressions, black as a smith's beard, Vulcanic, Stygian. At such times I have recourse to a pipe, which is like not being at home to a dun: he comes again with tenfold bitterness

the next day.—(Mind, I am not in debt; I only borrow a similitude from others; it shows imagination.) I have done two books since the failure of my farce; they will both be out this Summer. The one is a juvenile book — the *Adventures of Ulysses*, intended to be an introduction to the reading of *Telemachus!* It is done out of the *Odyssey*, not from the Greek (I would not mislead you), nor yet from Pope's *Odyssey*, but from an older translation of one Chapman. The *Shakspeare Tales* suggested the doing of it. Godwin is in both those cases my bookseller. The other is done for Longman, and is *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets contemporary with Shakspeare*. Specimens are becoming fashionable. We have "Specimens of Ancient English Poets," "Specimens of Modern English Poets," "Specimens of Ancient English Prose Writers," without end. They used to be called "Beauties." You have seen "Beauties of Shakspeare"? so have many people that never saw any beauties in Shakspeare. Longman is to print it, and be at all the expense and risk, and I am to share the profits after all deductions; *i.e.* a year or two hence I must pocket what they please to tell me is due to me. But the book is such as I am glad there should be. It is done out of old plays at the Museum, and out of Dodsley's collection, etc. It is to have notes. So I go creeping on since was lamed with that cursed fall from off the

top of Drury Lane Theatre into the pit, something more than a year ago. However, I have been free of the house ever since, and the house was pretty free with me upon that occasion. Damn 'em, how they hissed! It was not a hiss neither, but a sort of a frantic yell, like a congregation of mad geese, with roaring sometimes, like bears, mows and mops like apes, sometimes snakes, that hiss'd me into madness. 'Twas like St. Anthony's temptations. Mercy on us, that God should give his favourite children, men, mouths to speak with, to discourse rationally, to promise smoothly, to flatter agreeably, to encourage warmly, to counsel wisely, to sing with, to drink with, and to kiss with, and that they should turn them into mouths of adders, bears, wolves, hyenas, and whistle like tempests, and emit breath through them like distillations of aspic poison, to asperse and vilify the innocent labours of their fellow-creatures who are desirous to please them! Heaven be pleased to make the breath stink and teeth rot out of them all therefore: make them a reproach, and all that pass by them to loll out their tongue at them! Blind mouths! as Milton somewhere calls them. Do you like Braham's singing? The little Jew has bewitched me. I follow him like as the boys followed Tom the Piper. He cures me of melancholy as David cured Saul: but I don't throw stones at him as Saul did at David

in payment. I was insensible to music till he gave me a new sense. Oh that you could go to the new opera of *Kais* to-night! 'Tis all about Eastern manners; it would just suit you. It describes the wild Arabs, wandering Egyptians, lying dervises, and all that sort of people, to a hair. You needn't ha' gone so far to see what you see, if you saw it as I do every night at Drury Lane Theatre. Braham's singing, when it is impassioned, is finer than Mrs. Siddons's or Mr. Kemble's acting! and when it is not impassioned, it is as good as hearing a person of fine sense talking. The brave little Jew! Old Sergeant Hill is dead. Mrs. Rickman is in the family way. It is thought that Hazlitt will have children if he marries Miss Stoddart. I made a pun the other day, and palmed it upon Holcroft, who grinned like a Cheshire cat. (Why do cats grin in Cheshire?—Because it was once a county palatine, and the cats cannot help laughing whenever they think of it, though I see no great joke in it.) I said that Holcroft, on being asked who were the best dramatic writers of the day, replied, "HOOK AND I." Mr. Hook is author of several pieces, *Tekeli*, etc. You know what *hooks and eyes* are, don't you? They are what little boys do up their breeches with. Your letter had many things in it hard to be understood: the puns were ready and Swift-like; but don't you begin to be melancholy in the midst of Eastern

customs? "The mind does not easily conform to foreign usages, even in trifles: it requires something that it has been familiar with." That begins one of Dr. Hawkesworth's papers in the *Adventurer*, and is, I think, as sensible a remark as ever fell from the Doctor's mouth. White is at Christ's Hospital, a wit of the first magnitude, but would rather be thought a gentleman, like Congreve. You know Congreve's repulse which he gave to Voltaire, when he came to visit him as a *literary man*, that he wished to be considered only in the light of a private gentleman. I think the impertinent Frenchman was properly answered. I should just serve any member of the French Institute in the same manner, that wished to be introduced to me. Buonaparte has voted 5000 livres to Davy, the great young English Chemist! but it has not arrived. Coleridge has delivered two lectures at the Royal Institution; two more were attended, but he did not come. It is thought he has gone sick upon them. He isn't well, that's certain. Wordsworth is coming to see him. He sits up in a two pair of stairs room at the *Courier* Office, and receives visitors. . . .

Does any one read at Canton? Lord Moira is President of the Westminster Library. I suppose you might have interest with Sir Joseph Banks to get to be president of any similar institution that should be set up at Canton.

I think public reading-rooms the best mode of educating young men. Solitary reading is apt to give the headache. Besides, who knows that you *do* read? There are ten thousand institutions similar to the Royal Institution which have sprung up from it. There is the London Institution, the Southwark Institution, the Russell Square Rooms Institution, etc.—*College quasi Conlege*, a place where people read together. Wordsworth, the great poet, is coming to town; he is to have apartments in the Mansion House. He says he does not see much difficulty in writing like Shakspeare, if he had a mind to try it. It is clear, then, nothing is wanting but the mind. Even Coleridge a little checked at this hardihood of assertion. Dyer came to me the other evening at 11 o'clock, when there was a large room full of company, which I usually get together on a Wednesday evening (all great men have public days), to propose to me to have my face done by a Miss Beetham (or Betham), a miniature painter, some relation to Mrs. Beetham the Profilist or Pattern Mangle woman opposite St. Dunstan's, to put before my book of Extracts. I declined it.

Well, my dear Manning, talking cannot be infinite. I have said all I have to say; the rest is but remembrances of you, which we shall bear in our heads while we have heads. Here is a packet of trifles nothing worth; but it is a trifling part of the world where I live: empti-

ness abounds. But in fulness of affection, we remain yours, C. L.

To WILLIAM GODWIN

LETTER CXLIV.] *March* 11, 1808.

Dear Godwin—The giant's vomit was perfectly nauseous, and I am glad you pointed it out. I have removed the objection. To the other passages I can find no other objection but what you may bring to numberless passages besides, such as of Scylla snatching up the six men, etc.,—that is to say, they are lively images of *shocking* things. If you want a book, which is not occasionally to *shock*, you should not have thought of a tale which was so full of anthropophagi and wonders. I cannot alter these things without enervating the Book, and I will not alter them if the penalty should be that you and all the London booksellers should refuse it. But speaking as author to author, I must say that I think *the terrible* in those two passages seems to me so much to preponderate over the nauseous, as to make them rather fine than disgusting. Who is to read them, I don't know: who is it that reads "Tales of Terror" and "Mysteries of Udolpho"? Such things sell. I only say that I will not consent to alter such passages, which I know to be some

of the best in the book. As an author, I say to you, an author: touch not my work. As to a bookseller I say, Take the work such as it is, or refuse it. You are as free to refuse it as when we first talked of it. As to a friend I say, Don't plague yourself and me with nonsensical objections. I assure you I will not alter one more word.

To GEORGE DYER

LETTER CXLV.] *From my desk in Leadenhall Street, December* 5, 1808.

Dear Dyer—Coleridge is not so bad as your fears have represented him: it is true he is Bury'd, although he is not dead; to understand this quibble you must know that he is at Bury St. Edmunds, relaxing after the fatigues of lecturing and Londonising. The little Rickmaness whom you inquire after so kindly, thrives and grows apace; she is already a prattler, and 'tis thought that on some future day she may be a speaker. We hold our weekly meetings still at No. 16, where although we are not so high as the top of Malvern we are involved in almost as much mist. Miss B.'s merit "in every point of view" I am not disposed to question, although I have not been indulged with any view of that lady, back, side or front—fie, Dyer, to praise a female in such common market

phrases—you who are so courtly and so attentive. My book is not yet out, that is, not my *Extracts;* my *Ulysses* is, and waits your acceptance. When you shall come to town, I hope to present you both together, never thinking of your buying the *Extracts*—half a guinea books were never calculated for my friends. More poets have started up since your departure; William Hazlitt, your friend and mine, is putting to press a collection of verses, chiefly amatory, some of them pretty enough. How these painters encroach on our province! There's Hopner, Shee, Westall, and I don't know who beside, and Tresham. It seems, on confession, that they are not at the top of their own art, when they seek to eke out their fame with the assistance of another's; no large tea-dealer sells cheeses, and no great silversmith deals in razor-straps; it is only your petty dealers who mix commodities. If Nero had been a great emperor he would never have played the violoncello. Who ever caught you, Dyer, designing a landscape or taking a likeness? I have no more to add, who am a friend of virtue, poetry, and painting, therefore, in an especial manner, unalterably thine,

C. LAMB.

To G. Dyer, Esq.,
Jas. Martin's Wood,
Overbury, Worcestershire.

To Mrs. HAZLITT

LETTER CXLVI.] *Saturday, December* 10, 1808.

There came this morning a printed Prospectus from "S. T. Coleridge, Grasmere," of a Weekly Paper, to be called *The Friend;* a flaming Prospectus. I have no time to give the heads of it. To commence the first Saturday in January. There came also notice of a turkey from Mr. Clarkson, which I am more sanguine in expecting the accomplishment of than I am of Coleridge's prophecy. C. LAMB.

Mrs. Hazlitt, Winterslow,
near Sarum, Wilts.

CHAPTER III

1809—1816

LETTERS TO MANNING, COLERIDGE, WORDSWORTH, AND OTHERS

To ROBERT LLOYD

LETTER CXLVII.] *Saturday, February* 25, 1809.

Dear Robert—A great gap has been filled up since our intercourse was broken off. We shall at least have some things to talk over when we meet. That you should never have been in London since I saw you last is a fact which I cannot account for on the principles of my own mental formation. You are worthy to be mentioned with Claudian's "Old Man of Verona." I forbear to ask you any questions concerning your family: *who* are dead, and *who* married; I will not anticipate our meeting. I have been in total darkness respecting you all these years. I am just up; and have heard, without being able to confirm the fact, that Drury Lane Theatre is burnt to the ground.

Of Walton's *Angler* a new edition is just published with the original plates revived. I think of buying it. The old editions are two guineas, and two guineas and a half. I have not forgotten our ride from Saffron Walden, and the madness of young parson Thomson of Cambridge, that I took your brother to see. He is gone as a missionary to the East.

I live at present at No. 16 Mitre Court Buildings, Inner Temple. I shall move at Lady Day, or a little later: if you don't find me in M.C.B., I shall be at No. 2 *or* 4 Inner Temple Lane, at either of which places I shall be happy to shake my old friend Robert by the hand.

C. L.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CXLVIII.] 34 *Southampton Buildings*, *March* 28, 1809.

Dear Manning—I sent you a long letter by the ships which sailed the beginning of last month, accompanied with books, etc. Since I last wrote Holcroft is dead. He died on Thursday last. So there is one of your friends whom you will never see again! Perhaps the next fleet may bring you a letter from Martin Burney, to say that he writes by desire of Miss Lamb, who is not well enough to write herself, to inform you that her brother died on Thursday

last, 14th June, etc. But I hope *not*. I should be sorry to give occasion to open a correspondence between Martin and you. This letter must be short, for I have driven it off to the very moment of doing up the packets; and besides, that which I refer to above is a very long one; and if you have received my books, you will have enough to do to read them. While I think on it, let me tell you, we are moved. Don't come any more to Mitre Court Buildings. We are at 34, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, and shall be here till about the end of May; then we remove to No. 4, Inner Temple Lane, where I mean to live and die; for I have such horror of moving, that I would not take a benefice from the King if I was not indulged with non-residence. What a dislocation of comfort is comprised in that word "moving"! Such a heap of little nasty things, after you think all is got into the cart: old dredging-boxes, worn-out brushes, gallipots, vials, things that it is impossible the most necessitous person can ever want, but which the women, who preside on these occasions, will not leave behind if it was to save your soul. They'd keep the cart ten minutes to stow in dirty pipes and broken matches, to show their economy. Then you can find nothing you want for many days after you get into your new lodgings. You must comb your hair with your fingers, wash your

hands without soap, go about in dirty gaiters. Were I Diogenes, I would not move out of a kilderkin into a hogshead, though the first had had nothing but small beer in it, and the second reeked claret. Our place of final destination—I don't mean the grave, but No. 4, Inner Temple Lane—looks out upon a gloomy churchyard-like court, called Hare Court, with three trees and a pump in it. Do you know it? I was born near it, and used to drink at that pump when I was a Rechabite of six years old. If you see newspapers you will read about Mrs. Clarke. The sensation in London about this nonsensical business is marvellous. I remember nothing in my life like it: thousands of ballads, caricatures, lives of Mrs. Clarke, in every blind alley. Yet in the midst of this stir, a sublime abstracted dancing-master, who attends a family we know at Kensington, being asked a question about the progress of the examinations in the House, inquired who Mrs. Clarke was? He had heard nothing of it. He had evaded this omnipresence by utter insignificancy! The Duke should make that man his confidential valet. I proposed locking him up, barring him the use of his fiddle and red pumps, until he had minutely perused and committed to memory the whole body of the examinations, which employed the House of Commons a fortnight, to teach him to be more attentive to what concerns the public. I think I told you of

Godwin's little book, and of Coleridge's prospectus, in my last; if I did not, remind me of it, and I will send you them, or an account of them, next fleet. I have no conveniency of doing it by this. Mrs. Godwin grows every day in disfavour with me. I will be buried with this inscription over me:—"Here lies C. L., the woman-hater": I mean that hated one woman: for the rest, God bless them! How do you like the Mandarinesses? Are you on some little footing with any of them? This is Wednesday. On Wednesdays is my levee. The Captain, Martin, Phillips (not the Sheriff), Rickman, and some more, are constant attendants, besides stray visitors. We play at whist, eat cold meat and hot potatoes, and any gentleman that chooses smokes. Why do you never drop in? You'll come some day, won't you?

C. LAMB, etc.

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LETTER CXLIX.] *June* 7, 1809.

Dear Coleridge—I congratulate you on the appearance of the *Friend*. Your first Number promises well, and I have no doubt the succeeding Numbers will fulfil the promise. I had a kind letter from you some time since, which I have left unanswered. I am also obliged to you, I

believe, for a review in the Annual, am I not? The *Monthly Review* sneers at me, and asks "if *Comus* is not *good enough* for Mr. Lamb?" because I have said no good serious dramas have been written since the death of Charles the First, except *Samson Agonistes*. So because they do not know, or won't remember, that *Comus* was written long before, I am to be set down as an undervaluer of Milton! O Coleridge, do kill those reviews, or they will kill us; kill all we like. Be a friend to all else, but their foe. I have been turned out of my chambers in the Temple by a landlord who wanted them for himself, but I have got other at No. 4, Inner Temple Lane, far more commodious and roomy. I have two rooms on the third floor and five rooms above, with an inner staircase to myself, and all new painted, etc., and all for £30 a year! I came into them on Saturday week; and on Monday following Mary was taken ill with the fatigue of moving; and affected, I believe, by the novelty of the home she could not sleep, and I am left alone with a maid quite a stranger to me, and she has a month or two's sad distraction to go through. What sad large pieces it cuts out of life!—out of *her* life, who is getting rather old; and we may not have many years to live together. I am weaker, and bear it worse than I ever did. But I hope we shall be comfortable by and by. The rooms are delicious, and the best look backwards into Hare Court, where there is a pump always

going. Just now it is dry. Hare Court trees come in at the window, so that 'tis like living in a garden. I try to persuade myself it is much pleasanter than Mitre Court; but, alas! the household gods are slow to come in a new mansion. They are in their infancy to me; I do not feel them yet; no hearth has blazed to them yet. How I hate and dread new places!

I was very glad to see Wordsworth's book advertised: I am to have it to-morrow lent me, and if Wordsworth don't send me an order for one upon Longman, I will buy it. It is greatly extolled and liked by all who have seen it. Let me hear from some of you, for I am desolate. I shall have to send you, in a week or two, two volumes of Juvenile Poetry, done by Mary and me within the last six months, and that tale in prose which Wordsworth so much liked, which was published at Christmas, with nine others, by us, and has reached a second edition. There's for you. We have almost worked ourselves out of child's work, and I don't know what to do. Sometimes I think of a drama, but I have no head for play-making; I can do the dialogue, and that's all. I am quite aground for a plan; but I must do something for money. Not that I have immediate wants, but I have prospective ones. O money, money, how blindly thou hast been worshipped, and how stupidly abused! Thou art health and liberty and strength; and he that has thee may rattle his pockets at the Devil.

Nevertheless, do not understand by this that I have not quite enough for my occasions for a year or two to come. While I think on it, Coleridge, I fetch'd away my books which you had at the *Courier* Office, and found all but a third volume of the old plays, containing the *White Devil*, Green's *Tu Quoque*, and the *Honest Whore*, perhaps the most valuable volume of them all—*that* I could not find. Pray, if you can, remember what you did with it, or where you took it out with you a walking perhaps; send me word, for, to use the old plea, it spoils a set. I found two other volumes (you had three), the *Arcadia*, and *Daniel*, enriched with manuscript notes. I wish every book I have were so noted. They have thoroughly converted me to relish *Daniel*, or to say I relish him, for after all, I believe I did relish him. You well call him sober-minded. Your notes are excellent. Perhaps you've forgot them. I have read a review in the *Quarterly*, by Southey, on the Missionaries, which is most masterly. I only grudge its being there. It is quite beautiful. Do remember my Dodsley; and, pray, do write, or let some of you write. Clarkson tells me you are in a smoky house. Have you cured it? It is hard to cure anything of smoking. Our little poems are but humble, but they have no name. You must read them, remembering they were task work; and perhaps you will admire the number of subjects, all of children, picked out by an old Bachelor and

an old Maid. Many parents would not have found so many. Have you read *Cælebs?* It has reached eight editions in so many weeks, yet literally it is one of the very poorest sort of common novels, with the drawback of dull religion in it. Had the religion been high and flavoured, it would have been something. I borrowed this *Cælebs in Search of a Wife*, of a very careful, neat lady, and returned it with this stuff written in the beginning :—

> "If ever I marry a wife
> I'll marry a landlord's daughter,
> For then I may sit in the bar,
> And drink cold brandy and water."

I don't expect you can find time from your *Friend* to write to me much ; but write something, for there has been a long silence. You know Holcroft is dead. Godwin is well. He has written a very pretty, absurd book about sepulchres. He was affronted because I told him it was better than Hervey, but not so good as Sir T. Browne. This letter is all about books ; but my head aches, and I hardly know what I write, but I could not let the *Friend* pass without a congratulatory epistle. I won't criticise till it comes to a volume. Tell me how I shall send my packet to you ?—by what conveyance ?—by Longman, Short-man, or how ? Give my kindest remembrances to Wordsworth. Tell him he must give me a book. My kind love to Mrs. W. and to

Dorothy separately and conjointly. I wish you could all come and see me in my new rooms. God bless you all. C. L.

To CHARLES LLOYD, THE ELDER

LETTER CL.] *July* 31, 1809.

Dear Sir—The general impression made by your Translation on the mind of my friend who kept your MS. so unreasonably long, as well as on another friend who read over a good part of it with me, was that it gave a great deal more of the sense of Homer than either of his two great modern Translators have done. In several expressions which they at first objected to, on turning to the Greek they found it completely warranted you in the use of them; and they were even surprised that you could combine so much fidelity with so much of the turn of the best modern improvements in the Couplet versification. I think of the two, I rather prefer the Book of the Iliad which you sent me, for the sound of the verse; but the difference of subject almost involuntarily modifies verse. I find Cowper is a favourite with nobody. His injudicious use of the stately slow Miltonic verse in a subject so very different, has given a distaste. Nothing can be more unlike to my fancy than Homer and Milton. Homer

is perfect prattle, tho' exquisite prattle, compared to the deep oracular voice of Milton. In Milton you love to stop, and saturate your mind with every great image or sentiment; in Homer you want to go on, to have more of his agreeable narrative. Cowper delays you as much, walking over a Bowling Green, as the other does, travelling over steep Alpine heights, where the labour enters into and makes a part of the pleasure. From what I have seen, I would certainly be glad to hear that you continued your employment quite through the Poem: that is, for an agreeable and honourable recreation to yourself; though I should scarce think that (Pope having got the ground) a translation in Pope's Couplet versification would ever supersede his to the public, however faithfuller or in some respects better. Pitt's Virgil is not much read, I believe, though nearer to the Original than Dryden's. Perhaps it is, that people do not like two Homers or Virgils —there is a sort of confusion in it to an English reader, who has not a centre of reference in the Original: when Tate and Brady's Psalms came out in our Churches, many pious people would not substitute them in the room of David's, as they call'd Sternhold and Hopkins's. But if you write for a relaxation from other sort of occupations I can only congratulate you, Sir, on the noble choice, as it seems to me, which you have made, and express my wonder at the

facility which you suddenly have arrived at, if (as I suspect) these are indeed the first specimens of this sort which you have produced. But I cannot help thinking that you betray a more practised gait than a late beginner could so soon acquire. Perhaps you have only resumed what you had formerly laid aside as interrupting more necessary avocations.

I need not add how happy I shall be to see at any time what you may please to send me. In particular, I should be glad to see that you had taken up Horace, which I think you enter into as much as any man that was not born in his days, and in the *Via Longa* or *Flaminia*, or near the *Forum*.

With many apologies for keeping your MS. so long, which my friend's engagements in business must excuse,—I remain, Dear Sir, yours truly, C. L.

My kind respects to Mrs. Ll., and my remembrances to Robert, etc. etc.

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LETTER CLI.] *Monday, October* 30, 1809.

Dear Coleridge—I have but this moment received your letter, dated the 9th instant, having

just come off a journey from Wiltshire, where I have been with Mary on a visit to Hazlitt. The journey has been of infinite service to her. We have had nothing but sunshiny days, and daily walks from eight to twenty miles a day ; have seen Wilton, Salisbury, Stonehenge, etc. Her illness lasted but six weeks ; it left her weak, but the country has made us whole. We came back to our Hogarth Room. I have made several acquisitions since you saw them,—and found Nos. 8, 9, 10 of the *Friend*. The account of Luther in the Warteburg is as fine as anything I ever read. God forbid that a man who has such things to say should be silenced for want of £100. This Custom-and-Duty Age would have made the Preacher on the Mount take out a licence and St. Paul's Epistles would not have been missible without a stamp. O that you may find means to go on ! But alas ! where is Sir G. Beaumont ?—Sotheby ? What is become of the rich Auditors in Albemarle Street ? Your letter has saddened me.

I am so tired with my journey, being up all night, that I have neither things nor words in my power. I believe I expressed my admiration of the pamphlet. Its power over me was like that which Milton's pamphlets must have had on his contemporaries, who were tuned to them. What a piece of prose ! Do you hear if it is read at all ? I am out of the world of readers. I hate all that do read, for they read nothing

but reviews and new books. I gather myself up unto the old things.

I have put up shelves. You never saw a book-case in more true harmony with the contents than what I've nailed up in a room, which, though new, has more aptitudes for growing old than you shall often see—as one sometimes gets a friend in the middle of life, who becomes an old friend in a short time. My rooms are luxurious; one is for prints and one for books; a Summer and a Winter parlour. When shall I ever see you in them? C. L.

To ROBERT LLOYD

LETTER CLII.] *January* 1, 1810.

Dear Robert—In great haste I write. The Turkey is down at the fire, and some pleasant friends are come in to partake of it. The Sender's Health shall not be forgot. What you tell me of your Father's perseverance in his honourable task gives me great pleasure. Seven Books are a serious earnest of the whole, which I hope to see finish'd.

We had a delightful month in Wiltshire, four weeks of uniform fine weather, the only fine days which had been all the summer. Saw Salisbury Cathedral, Stonehenge, Wilton, etc. etc. Mary is in excellent health, and sends

her Love. Accept of mine, with my kind respects to Mrs. Ll—— and to your father and mother.

Coleridge's *Friend* is occasionally sublime. What do you think of that Description of Luther in his Study in one of the earlier numbers? The worst is, he is always promising something which never comes; it is now 18th Number, and continues introductory; the 17th (that stupid long letter) was nothing better than a Prospectus, and ought to have preceded the 1st Number. But I rejoice that it lives.

When you come to London, you will find us at No. 4, Inner Temple Lane, with a few old Books, a few old Hogarths round the room, and the Household Gods at last establish'd. The feeling of Home, which has been slow to come, has come at last. May I never move again, but may my next Lodging be my Coffin.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CLIII.] *January* 2, 1810.

Dear Manning—When I last wrote to you I was in lodgings. I am now in chambers, No. 4, Inner Temple Lane, where I should be happy to see you any evening. Bring any of your

friends, the Mandarins, with you. I have two sitting-rooms: I call them so *par excellence*, for you may stand, or loll, or lean, or try any posture in them, but they are best for sitting; not squatting down Japanese fashion, but the more decorous use of the haunches which European usage has consecrated. I have two of these rooms on the third floor, and five sleeping, cooking, etc., rooms, on the fourth floor. In my best room is a choice collection of the works of Hogarth, an English painter of some humour. In my next best are shelves containing a small but well-chosen library. My best room commands a court, in which there are trees and a pump, the water of which is excellent cold, with brandy, and not very insipid without. Here I hope to set up my rest, and not quit till Mr. Powell, the undertaker, gives me notice that I may have possession of my last lodging. He lets lodgings for single gentlemen. I sent you a parcel of books by my last, to give you some idea of the state of European literature. There comes with this two volumes, done up as letters, of minor poetry, a sequel to "Mrs. Leicester"; the best you may suppose mine; the next best are my coadjutor's. You may amuse yourself in guessing them out; but I must tell you mine are but one-third in quantity of the whole. So much for a very delicate subject. It is hard to speak of one's self, etc. Holcroft had finished his life when I wrote to you, and Hazlitt has since

finished his life; I do not mean his own life, but he has finished a life of Holcroft, which is going to press. Tuthill is Dr. Tuthill. I continue Mr. Lamb. I have published a little book for children on titles of honour; and to give them some idea of the difference of rank and gradual rising, I have made a little scale, supposing myself to receive the following various accessions of dignity from the king, who is the fountain of honour—As at first, 1, Mr. C. Lamb; 2, C. Lamb, Esq.; 3, Sir C. Lamb, Bart.; 4, Baron Lamb, of Stamford; 5, Viscount Lamb; 6, Earl Lamb; 7, Marquis Lamb; 8, Duke Lamb. It would look like quibbling to carry it on further, and especially as it is not necessary for children to go beyond the ordinary titles of sub-regal dignity in our own country; otherwise I have sometimes in my dreams imagined myself still advancing, as 9th, King Lamb; 10th, Emperor Lamb; 11th, Pope Innocent; higher than which is nothing upon earth. Puns I have not made many (nor punch much) since the date of my last; one I cannot help relating. A constable in Salisbury Cathedral was telling me that eight people dined at the top of the spire of the cathedral; upon which I remarked, that they must be very sharp set. But in general I cultivate the reasoning part of my mind more than the imaginative. I am stuffed out so with eating turkey for dinner, and another turkey for supper yesterday (Turkey in Europe and Turkey

in Asia), that I can't jog on. It is New Year here; that is, it was New Year half a year back, when I was writing this. Nothing puzzles me more than time and space; and yet nothing puzzles me less, for I never think about them. The Persian ambassador is the principal thing talked of now. I sent some people to see him worship the sun on Primrose Hill, at half-past six in the morning, 28th November; but he did not come, which makes me think the old fire-worshippers are a sect almost extinct in Persia. The Persian ambassador's name is Shaw Ali Mirza. The common people call him Shaw Nonsense. While I think of it, I have put three letters, besides my own three, into the India post for you, from your brother, sister, and some gentleman whose name I forget. Will they, have they, did they come safe? The distance you are at, cuts up tenses by the root. I think you said you did not know Kate * * * * * * * * *. I express her by nine stars, though she is but one. You must have seen her at her father's. Try and remember her. Coleridge is bringing out a paper in weekly Numbers, called the *Friend*, which I would send if I could; but the difficulty I had in getting the packets of books out to you before, deters me; and you'll want something new to read when you come home. It is chiefly intended to puff off Wordsworth's poetry; but there are some noble things in it by the by. Except Kate, I

have had no vision of excellence this year, and she passed by like the Queen on her coronation day ; you don't know whether you saw her or not. Kate is fifteen : I go about moping, and sing the old pathetic ballad I used to like in my youth—

"She's sweet fifteen,
I'm *one year more.*"

Mrs. Bland sang it in boy's clothes the first time I heard it. I sometimes think the lower notes in my voice are like Mrs. Bland's. That glorious singer, Braham, one of my lights, is fled. He was for a season. He was a rare composition of the Jew, the gentleman, and the angel ; yet all these elements mixed up so kindly in him, that you could not tell which preponderated; but he is gone, and one Phillips is engaged instead. Kate is vanished, but Miss B—— is always to be met with !

"Queens drop away, while blue-legg'd Maukin thrives ;
And courtly Mildred dies while country Madge survives."

That is not my poetry, but Quarles's; but haven't you observed that the rarest things are the least obvious ? Don't show anybody the names in this letter. I write confidentially, and wish this letter to be considered as *private.* Hazlitt has written a *grammar* for Godwin. Godwin sells it bound up with a treatise of his own on language; but the *gray mare is the better horse.* I don't

allude to Mrs. Godwin, but to the word *grammar*, which comes near to *gray mare*, if you observe, in sound. That figure is called paronomasia in Greek. I am sometimes happy in it. An old woman begged of me for charity. "Ah! sir," said she, "I have seen better days." "So have I, good woman," I replied; but I meant, literally, days not so rainy and overcast as that on which she begged: she meant more prosperous days. Mr. Dawe is made associate of the Royal Academy. By what law of association I can't guess. Mrs. Holcroft, Miss Holcroft, Mr. and Mrs. Godwin, Mr. and Mrs. Hazlitt, Mrs. Martin and Louisa, Mrs. Lum, Capt. Burney, Mrs. Burney, Martin Burney, Mr. Rickman, Mrs. Rickman, Dr. Stoddart, William Dollin, Mr. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Norris, Mr. Fenwick, Mrs. Fenwick, Miss Fenwick, a man that saw you at our house one day, and a lady that heard me speak of you; Mrs. Buffam that heard Hazlitt mention you, Dr. Tuthill, Mrs. Tuthill, Colonel Harwood, Mrs. Harwood, Mr. Collier, Mrs. Collier, Mr. Sutton, Nurse, Mr. Fell, Mrs. Fell, Mr. Marshall, are very well, and occasionally inquire after you.

I remain yours ever, CH. LAMB.

To CHARLES LLOYD, THE ELDER

LETTER CLIV.] *March* 10, 1810. *E. I. Ho.*

My dear Sir—The above are all the faults I, who profess myself to be a mere English Reader, could find after a scrupulous perusal twice over of your neat little Book. I assure you it gave me great pleasure in the perusal, much more in this shape than in the Manuscript, and I should be very sorry you should give up the finishing of it on so poor pretence as your *Age* [sixty-two], which is not so much by ten years as Dryden's when he wrote his fables, which are his best works allowed, and not more than Milton's when he had scarce entered upon his original Epic Poem. You have done nearly a third; persevere and let us see the whole. I am sure I should prize it for its Homeric plainness and truth above the confederate jumble of Pope, Broome and Fenton which goes under Pope's name, and is far inferior to his ILIAD. I have picked out what I think blemishes, but they are but a score of words (I am a mere word-pecker) in six times as many pages. The rest all gave me pleasure, and most of all the Book [the Sixth] in which Ulysses and Nausicaa meet. You have infused a kind of biblical patriarchal manner into it, it reads like some story of Jacob and Rachel, or some of those primitive manners. I am ashamed to carp at

words, but I did it in obedience to your desires, and the plain reason why I did not acknowledge your kind present *sooner* was that I had no criticisms of value to make. I shall certainly beg the opinion of my friend who read the two first Books on this enlarged Performance. But he is so very much engaged that I cannot at present get at him, and besides him I have no acquaintance that takes much interest in Poetry, Greek or English. But I hope and adjure you to go on, and do not make excuses of Age till you have completed the Odyssey, and done a great part of Horace besides. Then you will be entitled to hang up your Harp.

I am, Dear Sir, with Love to all your family, your hble. Serv., C. LAMB.

To JOHN MATHEW GUTCH

LETTER CLV.] *April* 9, 1810.

Dear Gutch—I did not see your brother, who brought me Wither; but he understood, he said, you were daily expecting to come to town: this has prevented my writing. The books have pleased me excessively: I should think you could not have made a better selection. I never saw *Philarete* before—judge of my pleasure. I could not forbear scribbling certain critiques in pencil on the blank leaves. Shall

I send them, or may I expect to see you in town? Some of them are remarks on the character of Wither and of his writings. Do you mean to have anything of that kind? What I have said on *Philarete* is poor, but I think some of the rest not so bad: perhaps I have exceeded my commission in scrawling over the copies; but my delight therein must excuse me, and pencil-marks will rub out. Where is the Life? Write, for I am quite in the dark.

Yours, with many thanks, C. LAMB.

Perhaps I could digest the few critiques prefixed to the Satires, Shepherds Hunting, etc., into a short abstract of Wither's character and works, at the end of his Life. But, may be, you don't want anything, and have said all you wish in the Life.

To BASIL MONTAGU

LETTER CLVI.] *Winterslow, near Sarum, July* 12, 1810.

Dear Montagu—I have turned and twisted the MSS. in my head, and can make nothing of them. I knew when I took them that I could not, but I do not like to do an act of ungracious necessity at once; so I am ever committing myself by half engagements, and

total failures. I cannot make anybody understand why I can't do such things; it is a defect in my occiput. I cannot put other people's thoughts together; I forget every paragraph as fast as I read it; and my head has received such a shock by an all-night journey on the top of the coach, that I shall have enough to do to nurse it into its natural pace before I go home. I must devote myself to imbecility; I must be gloriously useless while I stay here. How is Mrs. M.? will she pardon my inefficiency? The city of Salisbury is full of weeping and wailing. The bank has stopped payment; and everybody in the town kept money at it, or has got some of its notes. Some have lost all they had in the world. It is the next thing to seeing a city with the plague within its walls. The Wilton people are all undone; all the manufacturers there kept cash at the Salisbury bank; and I do suppose it to be the unhappiest county in England this, where I am making holiday. We propose setting out for Oxford Tuesday fortnight, and coming thereby home. But no more night travelling. My head is sore (understand it of the inside) with that deduction from my natural rest which I suffered coming down. Neither Mary nor I can spare a morsel of our rest: it is encumbent on us to be misers of it. Travelling is not good for us, we travel so seldom. If the sun be hell, it is not for the fire, but for the sempiternal motion of that miserable

body of light. How much more dignified leisure hath a mussel glued to his unpassable rocky limit two inch square! He hears the tide roll over him, backwards and forwards twice a day (as the Salisbury long coach goes and returns in eight-and-forty hours), but knows better than to take an outside night-place a top on't. He is the owl of the sea—Minerva's fish —the fish of wisdom.

Our kindest remembrances to Mrs. M.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM HAZLITT

LETTER CLVII.] *Thursday* [*August* 9, 1810].

Dear H.—Epistemon is not well. Our pleasant excursion has ended sadly for one of us. You will guess I mean my sister. She got home very well (I was very ill on the journey) and continued so till Monday night, when her complaint came on, and she is now absent from home.

I am glad to hear you are all well. I think I shall be mad if I take any more journeys, with two experiences against it. I found all well here. Kind remembrances to Sarah,—have just got her letter.

H. Robinson has been to Blenheim. He says you will be sorry to hear that we should

not have asked for the Titian Gallery there. One of his friends knew of it, and asked to see it. It is never shown but to those who inquire for it.

The pictures are all Titians, Jupiter and Ledas, Mars and Venuses, etc., all naked pictures, which may be a reason they don't show them to females. But he says they are very fine; and perhaps they are shown separately to put another fee into the shower's pocket. Well, I shall never see it.

I have lost all wish for sights. God bless you. I shall be glad to see you in London.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

Mr. Hazlitt, Winterslow,
near Salisbury.

To MISS WORDSWORTH

LETTER CLVIII.] [Autumn 1810.]

Mary has left a little space for me to fill up with nonsense, as the gèographers used to cram monsters in the voids of the maps, and call it Terra Incognita. She has told you how she has taken to water like a hungry otter. I too limp after her in lame imitation, but it goes against me a little at first. I have been acquaintance with it now for full four days, and it seems a moon. I am full of cramps and rheumatisms,

and cold internally, so that fire won't warm me; yet I bear all for virtue's sake. Must I then leave you, gin, rum, brandy, aqua-vitæ, pleasant jolly fellows? Damn temperance and he that first invented it!—some Anti-Noahite. Coleridge has powdered his head, and looks like Bacchus, Bacchus ever sleek and young. He is going to turn sober, but his clock has not struck yet; meantime he pours down goblet after goblet, the second to see where the first is gone, the third to see no harm happens to the second, a fourth to say there is another coming, and a fifth to say he is not sure he is the last.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CLIX.] *Friday, October* 19, 1810. *E. I. Ho.*

Dear W.—Mary has been very ill, which you have heard, I suppose, from the Montagus. She is very weak and low-spirited now. I was much pleased with your continuation of the Essay on Epitaphs. It is the only sensible thing which has been written on that subject, and it goes to the bottom. In particular I was pleased with your translation of that turgid epitaph into the plain feeling under it. It is perfectly a test. But what is the reason we have no good epitaphs after all?

A very striking instance of your position

might be found in the churchyard of Ditton-upon-Thames, if you know such a place. Ditton-upon-Thames has been blessed by the residence of a poet, who for love or money—I do not well know which—has dignified every gravestone, for the last few years, with bran-new verses, all different, and all ingenious, with the author's name at the bottom of each. This sweet Swan of Thames has so artfully diversified his strains and his rhymes, that the same thought never occurs twice; more justly, perhaps, as no thought ever occurs at all, there was a physical impossibility that the same thought should recur. It is long since I saw and read these inscriptions, but I remember the impression was of a smug usher at his desk in the intervals of instruction, levelling his pen. Of death, as it consists of dust and worms, and mourners and uncertainty, he had never thought; but the word "death" he had often seen separate and conjunct with other words, till he had learned to speak of all its attributes as glibly as Unitarian Belsham will discuss you the attributes of the word "God" in a pulpit; and will talk of infinity with a tongue that dangles from a skull that never reached in thought and thorough imagination two inches, or further than from his hand to his mouth, or from the vestry to the sounding-board of the pulpit.

But the epitaphs were trim, and sprag, and patent, and pleased the survivors of Thames-

Ditton above the old mumpsimus of "Afflictions Sore." . . . To do justice though, it must be owned that even the excellent feeling which dictated this dirge when new must have suffered something in passing through so many thousand applications, many of them no doubt quite misplaced, as I have seen in Islington churchyard (I think) an Epitaph to an infant who died "*Ætatis* four months," with this seasonable inscription appended, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land," etc. Sincerely wishing your children long life to honour, etc.

I remain, C. LAMB.

To MISS WORDSWORTH

LETTER CLX.] *November* 23, 1810.

We are in a pickle. Mary, from her affectation of physiognomy, has hired a stupid big country wench, who looked honest, as she thought, and has been doing her work some days, but without eating—eats no butter, nor meat, but prefers cheese with her tea for breakfast; and now it comes out that she was ill when she came, with lifting her mother about (who is now with God) when she was dying, and with riding up from Norfolk, four days and nights in the waggon. She got advice yesterday, and

took something which has made her bring up a quart of blood, and she now lies in her bed, a dead weight upon our humanity, incapable of getting up, refusing to go into an hospital, having nobody in town but a poor asthmatic uncle whose son lately married a drab who fills his house, and there is nowhere she can go, and she seems to have made up her mind to take her flight to heaven from our bed. Oh for the little wheel-barrow which trundled the hunchback from door to door to try the various charities of different professions of mankind! Here's her uncle just crawled up. He is far liker Death than she. Oh the Parish, the Parish, the hospital, the infirmary, the charnel-house!—these are places meet for such guests, not our quiet mansion, where nothing but affluent plenty and literary ease should abound.—Howard's House, Howard's House, or where the Paralytic descended through the skylight (what a God's gift!) to get at our Saviour. In this perplexity such topics as Spanish papers and Monkhouses sink into comparative insignificance. What shall we do? If she died, it were something: gladly would I pay the coffin-maker, and the bell-man and searchers. C. L.

To Miss Wordsworth, Grasmere,
near Kendal, Westmoreland.

To WILLIAM HAZLITT

LETTER CLXI.] *Wednesday, November* 28, 1810.

Dear Hazlitt—I sent you on Saturday a Cobbett, containing your reply to the *Edinburgh Review*, which I thought you would be glad to receive as an example of attention on the part of Mr. Cobbett to insert it so speedily. Did you get it? We have received your pig, and return you thanks; it will be dressed in due form, with appropriate sauce, this day. Mary has been very ill indeed since you saw her; that is, as ill as she can be to remain at home. But she is a good deal better now, owing to a very careful regimen. She drinks nothing but water, and never goes out; she does not even go to the Captain's. Her indisposition has been ever since that night you left town; the night Miss W[ordsworth] came. Her coming, and that d——d Mrs. Godwin coming and staying so late that night, so overset her that she lay broad awake all that night, and it was by a miracle that she escaped a very bad illness, which I thoroughly expected. I have made up my mind that she shall never have any one in the house again with her, and that no one shall sleep with her, not even for a night; for it is a very serious thing to be always living with a kind of fever upon her; and therefore I am sure you will take it in good part if I say that if Mrs. Hazlitt

comes to town at any time, however glad we shall be to see her in the daytime, I cannot ask her to spend a night under our roof. Some decision we must come to, for the harassing fever that we have both been in, owing to Miss Wordsworth's coming, is not to be borne; and I would rather be dead than so alive. However, at present, owing to a regimen and medicines which Tuthill has given her, who very kindly volunteer'd the care of her, she is a great deal quieter, though too much harassed by company, who cannot or will not see how late hours and society teaze her.

Poor Phillips had the cup dash'd out of his lips as it were. He had every prospect of the situation, when about ten days since one of the council of the R—— Society started for the place himself, being a rich merchant who lately failed, and he will certainly be elected on Friday next. P. is very sore and miserable about it.

Coleridge is in town, or at least at Hammersmith. He is writing or going to write in the *Courier* against Cobbett, and in favour of paper money.

No news. Remember me kindly to Sarah. I write from the office.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

I just open'd it to say the pig, upon proof, hath turned out as good as I predicted. My fauces yet retain the sweet porcine odour. I

find you have received the Cobbett. I think your paper complete.

Mrs. Reynolds, who is a sage woman, approves of the pig.

Mr. Hazlitt, Winterslow,
near Salisbury, Wilts.

To HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

LETTER CLXII.] [1810.]

Dear R. — My brother, whom you have met at my rooms (a plump, good-looking man of seven-and-forty) has written a book about humanity, which I transmit to you herewith. Wilson, the publisher, has put it into his head that you can get it reviewed for him. I dare say it is not in the scope of your review; but if you could put it in any likely train, he would rejoice. For alas! our boasted humanity partakes of vanity. As it is, he teazes me to death with choosing to suppose that I could get it into all the reviews at a moment's notice. *I!!* who have been set up as a mark for them to throw at, and would willingly consign them all to Megæra's snaky locks.

But here's the book, and don't show it to Mrs. Collier, for I remember she makes excellent *eel* soup, and the leading points of the book are directed against that very process.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM HAZLITT

LETTER CLXIII.] *October* 2, 1811.

Dear Hazlitt—I cannot help accompanying my sister's congratulations to Sarah with some of my own to you on this happy occasion of a man child being born.

Delighted fancy already sees him some future rich alderman or opulent merchant, painting perhaps a little in his leisure hours, for amusement, like the late H. Bunbury, Esq.

Pray, are the Winterslow estates entailed? I am afraid lest the young dog when he grows up should cut down the woods, and leave no groves for widows to take their lonesome solace in. The Wem estate of course can only devolve on him in case of your brother's leaving no male issue.

Well, my blessing and heaven's be upon him, and make him like his father, with something a better temper, and a smoother head of hair; and then all the men and women must love him.

Martin and the card-boys join in congratulations. Love to Sarah. Sorry we are not within candle-shot. C. LAMB.

If the widow be assistant on this notable occasion, give our due respects and kind remembrances to her.

Mr. Hazlitt, Winterslow,
near Sarum, Wilts.

To WILLIAM GODWIN

"Bis dat qui dat cito."

LETTER CLXIV.] [1811.]

I hate the pedantry of expressing that in another language which we have sufficient terms for in our own. So in plain English I very much wish you to give your vote to-morrow at Clerkenwell, instead of Saturday. It would clear up the brows of my favourite candidate, and stagger the hands of the opposite party. It commences at nine. How easy, as you come from Kensington (*à propos*, how is your excellent family?) to turn down Bloomsbury, through Leather Lane (avoiding Lay Stall St. for the disagreeableness of the name)! Why, it brings you in four minutes and a half to the spot renowned on northern milestones, "where Hicks' Hall formerly stood." There will be good cheer ready for every independent freeholder; where you see a green flag hang out, go boldly in, call for ham, or beef, or what you please, and a mug of Meux's best. How much more gentleman-like to come in the front of the battle, openly avowing one's sentiments, than to lag in on the last day, when the adversary is dejected, spiritless, laid low! Have the first cut at them. By Saturday you'll cut into the mutton. I'd go cheerfully myself, but I am no freeholder (Fuimus Troes, fuit Ilium), but I

sold it for £50. If they'd accept a copy-holder, we clerks are naturally *copy*-holders.

By the way, get Mrs. Hume, or that agreeable Amelia or Caroline, to stick a bit of green in your hat. Nothing daunts the adversary more than to wear the colours of your party. Stick it in cockade-like. It has a martial and by no means disagreeable effect.

Go, my dear freeholder, and if any chance calls you out of this transitory scene earlier than expected, the coroner shall sit lightly on your corpse. He shall not too anxiously inquire into the circumstances of blood found upon your razor. That might happen to any gentleman in shaving. Nor into your having been heard to express a contempt of life, or for scolding Louisa for what Julia did, and other trifling incoherencies.

Yours sincerely, C. LAMB.

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LETTER CLXV.] *August* 13, 1814.

Dear Resuscitate—There comes to you by the vehicle from Lad Lane this day a volume of German; what it is I cannot justly say, the characters of those northern nations having been always singularly harsh and unpleasant to me. It is a contribution of Dr. Southey's towards

your wants, and you would have had it sooner but for an odd accident. I wrote for it three days ago, and the Doctor, as he thought, sent it me. A book of like exterior he did send, but being disclosed, how far unlike! It was the *Well-bred Scholar*,—a book with which it seems the Doctor laudably fills up those hours which he can steal from his medical avocations. Chesterfield, Blair, Beattie, portions from the *Life of Savage*, make up a prettyish system of morality and the belles-lettres, which Mr. Mylius, a schoolmaster, has properly brought together, and calls the collection by the denomination above mentioned. The Doctor had no sooner discovered his error than he dispatched man and horse to rectify the mistake, and with a pretty kind of ingenuous modesty in his note, seemeth to deny any knowledge of the *Well-bred Scholar;* false modesty surely, and a blush misplaced: for what more pleasing than the consideration of professional austerity thus relaxing, thus improving! But so, when a child, I remember blushing, being caught on my knees to my Maker, or doing otherwise some pious and praiseworthy action: *now* I rather love such things to be seen. Henry Crabb Robinson is out upon his circuit, and his books are inaccessible without his leave and key. He is attending the Norfolk Circuit,—a short term, but to him, as to many young lawyers, a long vacation, sufficiently dreary. I thought I

could do no better than transmit to him, not extracts, but your very letter itself, than which I think I never read anything more moving, more pathetic, or more conducive to the purpose of persuasion. The Crab is a sour Crab if it does not sweeten him. I think it would draw another third volume of Dodsley out of me; but you say you don't want any English books. Perhaps, after all, that's as well; one's romantic credulity is for ever misleading one into misplaced acts of foolery. Crab might have answered by this time: his juices take a long time supplying, but they'll run at last—I know they will—pure golden pippin. A fearful rumour has since reached me that the Crab is on the eve of setting out for France. If he is in England your letter will reach him, and I flatter myself a touch of the persuasive of my own, which accompanies it, will not be thrown away; if it be, he is a sloe, and no true-hearted Crab, and there's an end. For that life of the German conjuror which you speak of, *Colerus de Vitâ Doctoris vix-Intelligibilis*, I perfectly remember the last evening we spent with Mrs. Morgan and Miss Brent, in London Street,—(by that token we had raw rabbits for supper, and Miss B. prevailed upon me to take a glass of brandy and water, which is not my habit),—I perfectly remember reading portions of that life in their parlour, and I think it must be among their packages. It was the very last evening we

were at that house. What is gone of that frank-hearted circle, Morgan, and his coslettuces? He ate walnuts better than any man I ever knew. Friendships in these parts stagnate.

. . . . .

I am going to eat turbot, turtle, venison, marrow pudding,—cold punch, claret, Madeira, —at our annual feast, at half-past four this day. They keep bothering me (I'm at office), and my ideas are confused. Let me know if I can be of any service as to books. God forbid the Architectonican should be sacrificed to a foolish scruple of some book proprietor, as if books did not belong with the highest propriety to those that understand 'em best. C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CLXVI.] *August* 14, 1814.

Dear Wordsworth—I cannot tell you how pleased I was at the receipt of the great armful of poetry which you have sent me; and to get it before the rest of the world too! I have gone quite through with it, and was thinking to have accomplished that pleasure a second time before I wrote to thank you, but M. Burney came in the night (while we were out) and made holy theft of it, but we expect restitution in a day or

two. It is the noblest conversational poem I ever read—a day in Heaven. The part (or rather main body) which has left the sweetest odour on my memory (a bad term for the remains of an impression so recent) is the Tales of the Churchyard; the only girl among seven brethren, born out of due time, and not duly taken away again,—the deaf man and the blind man;—the Jacobite and the Hanoverian, whom antipathies reconcile; the Scarron-entry of the rusticating parson upon his solitude;—these were all new to me too. My having known the story of Margaret (at the beginning), a very old acquaintance, even as long back as when I saw you first at Stowey, did not make her reappearance less fresh. I don't know what to pick out of this best of books upon the best subjects for partial naming. That gorgeous sunset is famous; I think it must have been the identical one we saw on Salisbury Plain five years ago, that drew Phillips from the card-table, where he had sat from rise of that luminary to its unequalled set; but neither he nor I had gifted eyes to see those symbols of common things glorified, such as the prophets saw them in that sunset—the wheel, the potter's clay, the wash-pot, the wine-press, the almond-tree rod, the basket of figs, the four-fold visaged head, the throne, and Him that sat thereon.

One feeling I was particularly struck with, as what I recognised so very lately at Harrow

Church on entering in it after a hot and secular day's pleasure, the instantaneous coolness and calming, almost transforming properties of a country church just entered ; a certain fragrance which it has, either from its holiness, or being kept shut all the week, or the air that is let in being pure country, exactly what you have reduced into words ; but I am feeling that which I cannot express. Reading your lines about it fixed me for a time, a monument in Harrow Church. Do you know it ? with its fine long spire, white as washed marble, to be seen, by vantage of its high site, as far as Salisbury spire itself almost.

I shall select a day or two, very shortly, when I am coolest in brain, to have a steady second reading, which I feel will lead to many more, for it will be a stock book with me while eyes or spectacles shall be lent me. There is a great deal of noble matter about mountain scenery, yet not so much as to overpower and discountenance a poor Londoner or south-countryman entirely, though Mary seems to have felt it occasionally a little too powerfully, for it was her remark during reading it, that by your system it was doubtful whether a liver in towns had a soul to be saved. She almost trembled for that invisible part of us in her.

Save for a late excursion to Harrow, and a day or two on the banks of the Thames this Summer, rural images were fast fading from my

mind, and by the wise provision of the Regent, all that was country-fy'd in the Parks is all but obliterated. The very colour of green is vanished; the whole surface of Hyde Park is dry crumbling sand (*Arabia Arenosa*), not a vestige or hint of grass ever having grown there. Booths and drinking-places go all round it for a mile and half, I am confident—I might say two miles in circuit. The stench of liquors, *bad* tobacco, dirty people and provisions, conquers the air, and we are stifled and suffocated in Hyde Park.

Order after order has been issued by Lord Sidmouth in the name of the Regent (acting in behalf of his Royal father) for the dispersion of the varlets, but in vain. The *vis unita* of all the publicans in London, Westminster, Marylebone, and miles round, is too powerful a force to put down. The Regent has raised a phantom which he cannot lay. There they'll stay probably for ever. The whole beauty of the place is gone—that lake-look of the Serpentine—it has got foolish ships upon it; but something whispers to have confidence in Nature and its revival—

> At the coming of the *milder day*,
> These monuments shall all be overgrown.

Meantime I confess to have smoked one delicious pipe in one of the cleanliest and goodliest of the booths; a tent rather—

> "Oh call it not a booth!"

erected by the public spirit of Watson, who keeps the Adam and Eve at Pancras (the ale-houses have all emigrated, with their train of bottles, mugs, corkscrews, waiters, into Hyde Park—whole ale-houses, with all their ale !), in company with some of the Guards that had been in France, and a fine French girl, habited like a princess of banditti, which one of the dogs had transported from the Garonne to the Serpentine. The unusual scene in Hyde Park, by candle-light, in open air,—good tobacco, bottled stout,—made it look like an interval in a campaign, a repose after battle. I almost fancied scars smarting, and was ready to club a story with my comrades of some of my lying deeds. After all, the fire-works were splendid ; the rockets in clusters, in trees and all shapes, spreading about like young stars in the making, floundering about in space (like unbroke horses), till some of Newton's calculations should fix them ; but then they went out. Any one who could see 'em, and the still finer showers of gloomy rain-fire that fell sulkily and angrily from 'em, and could go to bed without dreaming of the last day, must be as hardened an atheist as . . .

The conclusion of this epistle getting gloomy, I have chosen this part to desire *our* kindest loves to Mrs. Wordsworth and to Dorothea. Will none of you ever be in London again ?

Again let me thank you for your present, and assure you that fireworks and triumphs have not

distracted me from receiving a calm and noble enjoyment from it (which I trust I shall often), and I sincerely congratulate you on its appearance.

With kindest remembrances to you and your household, we remain, yours sincerely,

C. LAMB and Sister.

To SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LETTER CLXVII.] *August* 26, 1814.

Let the hungry soul rejoice, there is corn in Egypt. Whatever thou hast been told to the contrary by designing friends, who perhaps inquired carelessly, or did not inquire at all, in hope of saving their money, there is a stock of "Remorse" on hand — enough, as Pople conjectures, for seven years' consumption; judging from experience of the last two years. Methinks it makes for the benefit of sound literature, that the best books do not always go off best. Inquire in seven years' time for the *Rokebys* and the *Laras*, and where shall they be found?— fluttering fragmentally in some thread-paper; whereas thy *Wallenstein* and thy *Remorse* are safe on Longman's or Pople's shelves, as in some Bodleian; there they shall remain; no need of a chain to hold them fast—perhaps for ages—tall copies—and people shan't run about hunting

for them as in old Ezra's shrievalty they did for a Bible, almost without effect till the great-great-grand-niece (by the mother's side) of Jeremiah or Ezekiel (which was it?) remembered something of a book, with odd reading in it, that used to lie in the green closet in her aunt Judith's bedchamber.

Thy caterer, Price, was at Hamburgh when last Pople heard of him, laying up for thee like some miserly old father for his generous-hearted son to squander.

Mr. Charles Aders, whose books also pant for that free circulation which thy custody is sure to give them, is to be heard of at his kinsmen, Messrs. Jameson and Aders, No. 7, Laurence Pountney Lane, London, according to the information which Crabius with his parting breath left me. Crabius is gone to Paris. I prophesy he and the Parisians will part with mutual contempt. His head has a twist Allemagne, like thine, dear mystic.

I have been reading Madame Stael on Germany: an impudent clever woman. But if *Faust* be no better than in her abstract of it, I counsel thee to let it alone. How canst thou translate the language of cat-monkeys? Fie on such fantasies! But I will not forget to look for *Proclus*. It is a kind of book which, when we meet with it, we shut up faster than we opened it. Yet I have some bastard kind of recollection that somewhere, some time ago,

upon some stall or other, I saw it. It was either that or *Plotinus*, or Saint Augustine's *City of God*. So little do some folks value, what to others, *sc.* to you, "well used," had been the "Pledge of Immortality." Bishop Bruno I never touched upon. Stuffing too good for the brains of such a "Hare" as thou describest. May it burst his pericranium, as the gobbets of fat and turpentine (a nasty thought of the seer) did that old dragon in the Apocrypha! May he go mad in trying to understand his author! May he lend the third volume of him before he has quite translated the second, to a friend who shall lose it, and so spoil the publication, and may his friend find it and send it him just as thou or some such less dilatory spirit shall have announced the whole for the press. So I think I have answered all thy questions except about Morgan's cos-lettuce. The first personal peculiarity I ever observed of him (all worthy souls are subject to 'em) was a particular kind of rabbit-like delight in munching salads with oil without vinegar after dinner—a steady contemplative browsing on them—didst never take note of it? Canst think of any other queries in the solution of which I can give thee satisfaction? Do you want any books that I can procure for you? Old Jimmy Boyer is dead at last. Trollope has got his living, worth £1000 a year net. See, thou sluggard, thou heretic-sluggard, what mightest thou not have arrived at! Lay

thy animosity against Jimmy in the grave. Do not *entail* it on thy posterity.

CHARLES LAMB.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CLXVIII.] *August* 29, 1814.

My dear W.—I have scarce time or quiet to explain my present situation, how unquiet and distracted it is, owing to the absence of some of my compeers, and to the deficient state of payments at E. I. H., owing to bad peace speculations in the calico market. (I write this to W. W., Esq., Collector of Stamp Duties for the Conjoint Northern Counties, not to W. W., Poet.) I go back, and have for many days past, to evening work, generally at the rate of nine hours a day. The nature of my work, too, puzzling and hurrying, has so shaken my spirits, that my sleep is nothing but a succession of dreams of business I cannot do, of assistants that give me no assistance, of terrible responsibilities. I reclaimed your book, which Hazlitt has uncivilly kept, only two days ago, and have made shift to read it again with shattered brain. It does not lose—rather some parts have come out with a prominence I did not perceive before —but such was my aching head yesterday (Sunday), that the book was like a mountain

landscape to one that should walk on the edge of a precipice; I perceive beauty dizzily. Now, what I would say is, that I see no prospect of a quiet half-day, or hour even, till this week and the next are past. I then hope to get four weeks' absence, and if *then* is time enough to begin, I will most gladly do what is required, though I feel my inability, for my brain is always desultory, and snatches off hints from things, but can seldom follow a "work" methodically. But that shall be no excuse. What I beg you to do is, to let me know from Southey, if that will be time enough for the *Quarterly*, *i.e.* suppose it done in three weeks from this date (19th Sept.): if not, it is my bounden duty to express my regret, and decline it. Mary thanks you, and feels highly grateful for your "Patent of Nobility," and acknowledges the author of the *Excursion* as the legitimate Fountain of Honour. We both agree that, to our feeling, Ellen is best as she is. To us there would have been something repugnant in her challenging her Penance as a Dowry: the fact is explicable; but how few are those to whom it would have been rendered explicit! The unlucky reason of the detention of the *Excursion* was Hazlitt and we having a misunderstanding. He blowed us up about six months ago, since which the union hath snapt; but M. Burney borrowed it for him, and after reiterated messages I only got it on Friday. His remarks had some

vigour in them ; particularly something about an old ruin being *too modern for your Primeval Nature* and about *a lichen.* I forget the passage, but the whole wore a slovenly air of despatch. That objection which M. Burney had imbibed from him about Voltaire I explained to M. B. (or tried) exactly on your principle of its being a characteristic speech. That it was no settled comparative estimate of Voltaire with any of his own tribe of buffoons—no injustice, even if *you* spoke it, for I dared say you never could relish *Candide.* I know I tried to get through it about a twelvemonth since, and couldn't for the dulness. Now I think I have a wider range in buffoonery than you. Too much toleration perhaps.

I finish this after a raw ill-baked dinner fast gobbled up to set me off to office again, after working there till near four. Oh how I wish I were a rich man ! even though I were squeezed camel-fashion at getting through that needle's eye that is spoken of in the *Written Word.* Apropos ; are you a Christian ? or is it the Pedler and the Priest that are ?

I find I miscalled that celestial splendour of the mist going off, a *sunset.* That only shows my inaccuracy of head.

Do, pray, indulge me by writing an answer to the point of time mentioned above, or *let Southey.* I am ashamed to go bargaining in this way, but indeed I have no time I can reckon on till the first week in October. God send I

may not be disappointed in that! Coleridge swore in a letter to me he would review the *Excursion* in the *Quarterly*. Therefore, though *that* shall not stop me, yet if I can do anything *when* done, I must know of him if he has anything ready, or I shall fill the world with loud exclaims:

I keep writing on, knowing the postage is no more for much writing, else so fagged and dispirited I am with cursed India House work, I scarce know what I do. My left arm reposes on the *Excursion*. I feel what it would be in quiet. It is now a sealed book. C. LAMB.

LETTER CLXIX.] 1814.

Dear W.—Your experience about tailors seems to be in point blank opposition to Burton, as much as the author of the *Excursion* does, *toto cælo*, differ in his notion of a country life from the picture which W. H. has exhibited of the same. But, with a little explanation, you and B. may be reconciled. It is evident that he confined his observations to the genuine native London tailor. What freaks tailor-nature may take in the country is not for him to give account of. And certainly some of the freaks recorded do give an idea of the persons in question being beside themselves, rather than in harmony with the common, moderate, self-enjoyment of the rest of mankind. A flying tailor, I venture to say, is no more *in rerum*

naturâ than a flying horse or a gryphon. His wheeling his airy flight from the precipice you mention had a parallel in the melancholy Jew who toppled from the monument. Were his limbs ever found? Then, the man who cures diseases by words is evidently an inspired tailor. Burton never affirmed that the art of sewing disqualified the practiser of it from being a fit organ for supernatural revelation. He never enters into such subjects. 'Tis the common, uninspired tailor which he speaks of. Again, the person who makes his smiles to be *heard* is evidently a man under possession—a demoniac tailor. A greater hell than his own must have a hand in this. I am not certain that the cause which you advocate has much reason for triumph. You seem to me to substitute light-headedness for light-heartedness by a trick, or not to know the difference. I confess, a grinning tailor would shock me. Enough of tailors!

The "'scapes" of the great god Pan, who appeared among your mountains some dozen years since, and his narrow chance of being submerged by the swains, afforded me much pleasure. I can conceive the water-nymphs pulling for him. He would have been another Hylas — W. Hylas. In a mad letter which Capel Lofft wrote to *M*[*onthly*] *M*[*agazine*] Philips (now Sir Richard), I remember his noticing a metaphysical article of Pan, signed H., and adding, "I take your correspondent to

be the same with Hylas." Hylas had put forth a pastoral just before. How near the unfounded conjecture of the certainly inspired Lofft (unfounded as we thought it) was to being realised! I can conceive him being "good to all that wander in that perilous flood." One J. Scott (I know no more) is editor of the *Champion*. Where is Coleridge?

That Review you speak of, I am only sorry it did not appear last month. The circumstances of haste and peculiar bad spirits under which it was written would have excused its slightness and inadequacy, the full load of which I shall suffer from its lying by so long, as it will seem to have done, from its postponement. I write with great difficulty, and can scarce command my own resolution to sit at writing an hour together. I am a poor creature, but I am leaving off gin. I hope you will see good-will in the thing. I had a difficulty to perform not to make it all panegyric; I have attempted to personate a mere stranger to you; perhaps with too much strangeness. But you must bear that in mind when you read it, and not think that I am, in mind, distant from you or your poem, but that both are close to me, among the nearest of persons and things. I do but act the stranger in the Review. Then, I was puzzled about extracts, and determined upon not giving one that had been in the *Examiner*; for extracts repeated give an idea that there is a meagre

allowance of good things. By this way, I deprived myself of *Sir Alfred Irthing*, and the reflections that conclude his story, which are the flower of the poem. Hazlitt had given the reflections before me. *Then* it is the first review I ever did, and I did not know how long I might make it. But it must speak for itself, if Gifford and his crew do not put words in its mouth, which I expect. Farewell. Love to all. Mary keeps very bad. C. LAMB.

LETTER CLXX.] 1814.

Dear Wordsworth—I told you my Review was a very imperfect one. But what you will see in the *Quarterly* is a spurious one, which Mr. Baviad Gifford has palmed upon it for mine. I never felt more vexed in my life than when I read it. I cannot give you an idea of what he has done to it, out of spite at me, because he once suffered me to be called a lunatic in his Review. The *language* he has altered throughout. Whatever inadequateness it had to its subject, it was, in point of composition, the prettiest piece of prose I ever writ: and so my sister (to whom alone I read the MS.) said. That charm, if it had any, is all gone: more than a third of the substance is cut away, and that not all from one place, but *passim*, so as to make utter nonsense. Every warm expression is changed for a nasty cold one.

I have not the cursed alteration by me; I shall never look at it again; but for a specimen, I remember I had said the poet of the *Excursion* "walks through common forests as through some Dodona or enchanted wood, and every casual bird that flits upon the boughs, like that miraculous one in Tasso, but in language more piercing than any articulate sounds, reveals to him far higher love-lays." It is now (besides half-a-dozen alterations in the same half-dozen lines) "but in language more *intelligent* reveals to him";—that is one I remember.

But that would have been little, putting his damn'd shoemaker phraseology (for he was a shoemaker) instead of mine, which has been tinctured with better authors than his ignorance can comprehend;—for I reckon myself a dab at *prose*;—verse I leave to my betters: God help them, if they are to be so reviewed by friend and foe as you have been this quarter! I have read "It won't do." But worse than altering words; he has kept a few members only of the part I had done best, which was to explain all I could of your "Scheme of Harmonies," as I had ventured to call it, between the external universe and what within us answers to it. To do this I had accumulated a good many short passages, rising in length to the end, weaving in the extracts as if they came in as a part of the text naturally, not intruding them as specimens. Of this part a little is left,

but so as, without conjuration, no man could tell what I was driving at. A proof of it you may see (though not judge of the whole of the injustice) by these words. I had spoken something about "natural methodism"; and after follows, "and *therefore* the tale of Margaret should have been postponed" (I forget my words, or his words); now the reasons for postponing it are as deducible from what goes before as they are from the 104th Psalm. The passage whence I deduced it has vanished, but clapping a colon before a *therefore* is always reason enough for Mr. Baviad Gifford to allow to a reviewer that is not himself. I assure you my complaints are well founded. I know how sore a word altered makes one; but, indeed, of this review the whole complexion is gone. I regret only that I did not keep a copy. I am sure you would have been pleased with it, because I have been feeding my fancy for some months with the notion of pleasing you. Its imperfection or inadequateness in size and method I knew; but for the *writing part* of it I was fully satisfied; I hoped it would make more than atonement. Ten or twelve distinct passages come to my mind, which are gone; and what is left is, of course, the worse for their having been there; the eyes are pulled out, and the bleeding sockets are left.

I read it at Arch's shop with my face burning with vexation secretly, with just such a feeling

as if it had been a review written against myself, making false quotations from me. But I am ashamed to say so much about a short piece. How are *you* served! and the labours of years turned into contempt by scoundrels!

But I could not but protest against your taking that thing as mine. Every *pretty* expression (I know there were many), every warm expression (there was nothing else), is vulgarised and frozen. But if they catch me in their camps again, let them spitchcock me! They had a right to do it, as no name appears to it; and Mr. Shoemaker Gifford, I suppose, never waived a right he had since he commenced author. God confound him and all caitiffs! C. L.

LETTER CLXXI.] [1815.]

Dear Wordsworth—You have made me very proud with your successive book presents. I have been carefully through the two volumes, to see that nothing was omitted which used to be there. I think I miss nothing but a character in the antithetic manner, which I do not know why you left out,—the moral to the boys building the giant, the omission whereof leaves it, in my mind, less complete,—and one admirable line gone (or something come instead of it), "the stone-chat, and the glancing sand-piper," which was a line quite alive. I demand these at your hand. I am glad that you have not sacrificed a

verse to those scoundrels. I would not have had you offer up the poorest rag that lingered upon the stript shoulders of little Alice Fell, to have atoned all their malice; I would not have given 'em a red cloak to save their souls. I am afraid lest that substitution of a shell (a flat falsification of the history) for the household implement, as it stood at first, was a kind of tub thrown out to the beast, or rather thrown out for him. The tub was a good honest tub in its place, and nothing could fairly be said against it. You say you made the alteration for the "friendly reader," but the "malicious" will take it to himself. Damn 'em, if you give 'em an inch, etc. The Preface is noble, and such as you should write. I wish I could set my name to it, *Imprimatur*,—but you have set it there yourself, and I thank you. I would rather be a doorkeeper in your margin, than have their proudest text swelling with my eulogies. The poems in the volumes which are new to me are so much in the old tone that I hardly received them as novelties. Of those of which I had no previous knowledge, the "Four Yew Trees," and the mysterious company which you have assembled there, most struck me—"Death the Skeleton and Time the Shadow." It is a sight not for every youthful poet to dream of; it is one of the last results he must have gone thinking on for years for. "Laodamia" is a very original poem; I mean original with reference to your own manner.

You have nothing like it. I should have seen it in a strange place, and greatly admired it, but not suspected its derivation.

Let me in this place, for I have writ you several letters naming it, mention that my brother, who is a picture-collector, has picked up an undoubtable picture of Milton. He gave a few shillings for it, and could get no history with it, but that some old lady had had it for a great many years. Its age is ascertainable from the state of the canvas, and you need only see it to be sure that it is the original of the heads in the Tonson editions, with which we are all so well familiar. Since I saw you I have had a treat in the reading way, which comes not every day, the Latin Poems of V. Bourne, which were quite new to me. What a heart that man had! all laid out upon town schemes, a proper counterpoise to *some people's* rural extravaganzas. Why I mention him is, that your "Power of Music" reminded me of his poem of "The Ballad Singer in the Seven Dials." Do you remember his epigram on the old woman who taught Newton the A B C? which, after all, he says, he hesitates not to call Newton's "Principia." I was lately fatiguing myself with going through a volume of fine words by Lord Thurlow; excellent words; and if the heart could live by words alone, it could desire no better regales; but what an aching vacuum of matter! I don't stick at the madness of it, for that is only a

consequence of shutting his eyes and thinking he is in the age of the old Elizabeth poets. From thence I turned to Bourne. What a sweet, unpretending, pretty-mannered, *matter-ful* creature ! sucking from every flower, making a flower of everything, his diction all Latin, and his thoughts all English. Bless him ! Latin wasn't good enough for him. Why wasn't he content with the language which Gay and Prior wrote in ?

I am almost sorry that you printed extracts from those first poems, or that you did not print them at length. They do not read to me as they do altogether. Besides, they have diminished the value of the original, which I possess as a curiosity. I have hitherto kept them distinct in my mind as referring to a particular period of your life. All the rest of your poems are so much of a piece, they might have been written in the same week ; these decidedly speak of an earlier period. They tell more of what you had been reading. We were glad to see the poems "by a female friend." The one on the Wind is masterly, but not new to us. Being only three, perhaps you might have clapt a D. at the corner, and let it have passed as a printer's mark to the uninitiated, as a delightful hint to the better instructed. As it is, expect a formal criticism on the poems of your female friend, and she must expect it. I should have written before, but I am cruelly engaged, and like to be. On Friday I was at office from ten in the morning (two

hours dinner except) to eleven at night; last night till nine. My business and office business in general have increased so; I don't mean I am there every night, but I must expect a great deal of it. I never leave till four, and do not keep a holiday now once in ten times, where I used to keep all red-letter days, and some five days besides, which I used to dub Nature's holidays. I have had my day. I had formerly little to do. So of the little that is left of life, I may reckon two-thirds as dead, for time that a man may call his own is his life; and hard work and thinking about it taints even the leisure hours,—stains Sunday with work-day contemplations. This is Sunday: and the headache I have is part late hours at work the two preceding nights, and part later hours over a consoling pipe afterwards. But I find stupid acquiescence coming over me. I bend to the yoke, and it is almost with me and my household as with the man and his consort—

> "To them each evening had its glittering star,
> And every Sabbath Day its golden sun"—

to such straits am I driven for the life of life, Time! O that from that superfluity of holiday leisure my youth wasted, "Age might but take some hours youth wanted not!" *N.B.*—I have left off spirituous liquors for four or more months, with a moral certainty of its lasting. Farewell, dear Wordsworth!

O happy Paris, seat of idleness and pleasure!

from some returned English I hear that not such a thing as a counting-house is to be seen in her streets,—scarce a desk. Earthquakes swallow up this mercantile city and its "gripple merchants," as Drayton hath it—"born to be the curse of this brave isle!" I invoke this, not on account of any parsimonious habits the mercantile interest may have, but, to confess truth, because I am not fit for an office.

Farewell, in haste, from a head that is too ill to methodise, a stomach too weak to digest, and all out of tune. Better harmonies await you! C. LAMB.

LETTER CLXXII.]

Excuse this maddish letter: I am too tired to write *in formâ*.

1815.

Dear Wordsworth—The more I read of your last two volumes, the more I feel it necessary to make my acknowledgments for them in more than one short letter. The "Night Piece," to which you refer me, I meant fully to have noticed; but, the fact is, I come so fluttering and languid from business, tired with thoughts of it, frightened with the fears of it, that when I get a few minutes to sit down to scribble (an action of the hand now seldom natural to me—I mean voluntary pen-work) I lose all presential memory of what I had intended to say, and

say what I can, talk about Vincent Bourne, or any casual image, instead of that which I had meditated (by the way, I must look out V. B. for you). So I meant to mention "Yarrow Visited," with that stanza, "But thou that didst appear so fair"; than which I think no lovelier stanza can be found in the wide world of poetry;—yet the poem, on the whole, seems condemned to leave behind it a melancholy of imperfect satisfaction, as if you had wronged the feeling with which, in what preceded it, you had resolved never to visit it, and as if the Muse had determined, in the most delicate manner, to make you, and *scarce make you*, feel it. Else, it is far superior to the other, which has but one exquisite verse in it, the last but one, or the last two: this is all fine, except perhaps that *that* of "studious ease and generous cares" has a little tinge of the *less romantic* about it. "The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale" is a charming counterpart to "Poor Susan," with the addition of that delicacy towards aberrations from the strict path, which is so fine in the "Old Thief and the Boy by his side," which always brings water into my eyes. Perhaps it is the worse for being a repetition; "Susan" stood for the representative of poor *Rus in Urbe*. There was quite enough to stamp the moral of the thing never to be forgotten; "bright volumes of vapour," etc. The last verse of Susan was to be got rid of, at all events. It threw a kind of dubiety upon Susan's moral

conduct. Susan is a servant maid. I see her trundling her mop, and contemplating the whirling phenomenon through blurred optics; but to term her "a poor outcast" seems as much as to say that poor Susan was no better than she should be, which I trust was not what you meant to express. Robin Goodfellow supports himself without that *stick* of a moral which you have thrown away; but how I can be brought in *felo de omittendo* for that ending to the Boy-builders is a mystery. I can't say positively now,—I only know that no line oftener or readier occurs than that "Light-hearted boys, I will build up a Giant with you." It comes naturally, with a warm holiday, and the freshness of the blood. It is a perfect summer amulet, that I tie round my legs to quicken their motion when I go out a maying. (*N.B.*) I don't often go out a *may*ing;—*must* is the tense with me now. Do you take the pun? Young Romilly is divine; the reasons of his mother's grief being remediless. I never saw parental love carried up so high, towering above the other loves. Shakspeare had done something for the filial, in Cordelia, and, by implication, for the fatherly too, in Lear's resentment; he left it for you to explore the depths of the maternal heart. I get stupid, and flat, and flattering. What's the use of telling you what good things you have written, or—I hope I may add—that I know them to be good? Apropos—when I first opened upon the just

mentioned poem, in a careless tone, I said to Mary, as if putting a riddle, "*What is good for a bootless bene?*" To which, with infinite presence of mind (as the jest-book has it), she answered, "a shoeless pea." It was the first joke she ever made. Joke the second I make. You distinguish well, in your old preface, between the verses of Dr. Johnson, of the "Man in the Strand," and those from "The Babes in the Wood." I was thinking, whether taking your own glorious lines—

> "And from the love which was in her soul
> For her youthful Romilly,"

which, by the love I bear my own soul, I think have no parallel in any of the best old ballads, and just altering them to—

> "And from the great respect she felt
> For Sir Samuel Romilly,"

would not have explained the boundaries of prose expression, and poetic feeling, nearly as well. Excuse my levity on such an occasion. I never felt deeply in my life if that poem did not make me feel, both lately and when I read it in MS. No alderman ever longed after a haunch of buck venison more than I for a spiritual taste of that "White Doe" you promise. I am sure it is superlative, or will be when *drest*, *i.e.* printed. All things read raw to me in MS.; to compare *magna parvis*, I cannot endure my own writings

in that state. The only one which I think would not very much win upon me in print is "Peter Bell." But I am not certain. You ask me about your preface. I like both that and the supplement, without an exception. The account of what you mean by imagination is very valuable to me. It will help me to like some things in poetry better, which is a little humiliating in me to confess. I thought I could not be instructed in that science (I mean the critical), as I once heard old obscene, beastly Peter Pindar, in a dispute on Milton, say he thought that if he had reason to value himself upon one thing more than another, it was in knowing what good verse was. Who looked over your proof sheets and left *ordebo* in that line of Virgil?

My brother's picture of Milton is very finely painted; that is, it might have been done by a hand next to Vandyke's. It is the genuine Milton, and an object of quiet gaze for the half-hour at a time. Yet though I am confident there is no better one of him, the face does not quite answer to Milton. There is a tinge of *petit* (or *petite*, how do you spell it?) querulousness about it; yet, hang it! now I remember better, there is not; it is calm, melancholy, and poetical. *One* of the copies of the poems you sent has precisely the same pleasant blending of a sheet of second volume with a sheet of first. I think it was page 245; but I sent it and had it rectified. It gave me in the first impetus of

cutting the leaves just such a cold squelch as going down a plausible turning and suddenly reading "No thoroughfare!" Robinson's is entire: I wish you would write more criticism about Spenser, etc. I think I could say something about him myself; but, Lord bless me! these "merchants and their spicy drugs," which are so harmonious to sing of, they lime-twig up my poor soul and body, till I shall forget I ever thought myself a bit of a genius! I can't even put a few thoughts on paper for a newspaper. I "engross" when I should "pen" a paragraph. Confusion blast all mercantile transactions, all traffic, exchange of commodities, intercourse between nations, all the consequent civilisation, and wealth, and amity, and link of society, and getting rid of prejudices, and getting a knowledge of the face of the globe; and rotting the very firs of the forest, that look so romantic alive, and die into desks! *Vale.*

Yours, dear W., and all yours,

C. LAMB.

To ROBERT SOUTHEY

LETTER CLXXIII.] *London, May* 6, 1815.

Dear Southey—I have received from Longman a copy of *Roderick*, with the Author's Compliments, for which I much thank you.

I don't know where I shall put all the noble presents I have lately received in that way : the *Excursion*, Wordsworth's two last vols., and now *Roderick*, have come pouring in upon me like some irruption from Helicon. The story of the brave Maccabee was already, you may be sure, familiar to me in all its parts. I have, since the receipt of your present, read it quite through again, and with no diminished pleasure. I don't know whether I ought to say that it has given me more pleasure than any of your long poems. *Kehama* is doubtless more powerful, but I don't feel that firm footing in it that I do in *Roderick :* my imagination goes sinking and floundering in the vast spaces of unopened-before systems and faiths ; I am put out of the pale of my old sympathies ; my moral sense is almost outraged ; I can't believe, or with horror am made to believe, such desperate chances against Omnipotence, such disturbances of faith to the centre ; the more potent the more painful the spell. Jove, and his brotherhood of gods, tottering with the giant assailings, I can bear, for the soul's hopes are not struck at in such contests ; but your Oriental almighties are too much types of the intangible prototype to be meddled with without shuddering. One never connects what are called the attributes with Jupiter.—I mention only what diminishes my delight at the wonder-workings of *Kehama*, not what impeaches its power, which I confess with trembling ; but

Roderick is a comfortable poem. It reminds me of the delight I took in the first reading of the *Joan of Arc*. It is maturer and better than *that*, though not better to me now than that was then. It suits me better than *Madoc*. I am at home in Spain and Christendom. I have a timid imagination, I am afraid. I do not willingly admit of strange beliefs, or out-of-the-way creeds or places. I never read books of travels, at least not farther than Paris or Rome. I can just endure Moors, because of their connection as foes with Christians; but Abyssinians, Ethiops, Esquimaux, Dervises, and all that tribe, I hate. I believe I fear them in some manner. A Mahometan turban on the stage, though enveloping some well-known face (Mr. Cook or Mr. Maddox, whom I see another day good Christian and English waiters, innkeepers, etc.), does not give me pleasure unalloyed. I am a Christian, Englishman, Londoner, *Templar*. God help me when I come to put off these snug relations, and to get abroad into the world to come! I shall be like *the crow on the sand*, as Wordsworth has it; but I won't think on it: no need, I hope, yet.

The parts I have been most pleased with, both on first and second readings, perhaps, are Florinda's palliation of Roderick's crime, confessed to him in his disguise—the retreat of the Palayos family first discovered—his being made king—"For acclamation one form must serve

more solemn for the breach of *old observances.*" Roderick's vow is extremely fine, and his blessing on the vow of Alphonso :

> "Towards the troop he spread his arms,
> As if the expanded soul diffused itself,
> And carried to all spirits *with the act*
> Its affluent inspiration."

It struck me forcibly that the feeling of these last lines might have been suggested to you by the Cartoon of Paul at Athens. Certain it is that a better motto or guide to that famous attitude can nowhere be found. I shall adopt it as explanatory of that violent but dignified motion.

I must read again Landor's *Julian.* I have not read it some time. I think he must have failed in Roderick, for I remember nothing of him, nor of any distinct character as a character —only fine-sounding passages. I remember thinking also he had chosen a point of time after the event, as it were, for Roderick survives to no use ; but my memory is weak, and I will not wrong a fine poem by trusting to it.

The notes to your poem I have not read again : but it will be a take-downable book on my shelf, and they will serve sometimes at breakfast, or times too light for the text to be duly appreciated. Though some of 'em—one of the serpent penance—is serious enough, now I think on't. Of Coleridge I hear nothing, nor of the Morgans. I hope to have him like a

reappearing star, standing up before me some time when least expected in London, as has been the case whilere.

I am *doing* nothing (as the phrase is) but reading presents, and walk away what of the day hours I can get from hard occupation. Pray accept once more my hearty thanks, and expression of pleasure for your remembrance of me. My sister desires her kind respects to Mrs. S. and to all at Keswick.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

The next present I look for is the *White Doe.*

Have you seen Mat. Betham's *Lay of Marie?* I think it very delicately pretty as to sentiment, etc.

R. Southey, Esq.,
Keswick, near Penrith,
Cumberland.

LETTER CLXXIV.] *August* 9, 1815.

Dear Southey—Robinson is not on the circuit, as I erroneously stated in a letter to W. W., which travels with this, but is gone to Brussels, Ostend, Ghent, etc. But his friends, the Colliers, whom I consulted respecting your friend's fate, remember to have heard him say that Father Pardo had effected his escape (the cunning greasy rogue !), and to the best of their belief is at present in Paris. To my thinking, it is a

small matter whether there be one fat friar more or less in the world. I have rather a taste for clerical executions, imbibed from early recollections of the fate of the excellent Dodd. I hear Buonaparte has sued his habeas corpus, and the twelve judges are now sitting upon it at the Rolls.

Your boute-feu (bonfire) must be excellent of its kind. Poet Settle presided at the last great thing of the kind in London, when the pope was burnt in form. Do you provide any verses on this occasion? Your fear for Hartley's intellectuals is just and rational. Could not the Chancellor be petitioned to remove him? His lordship took Mr. Betty from under the paternal wing. I think at least he should go through a course of matter-of-fact with some sober man after the mysteries. Could not he spend a week at Poole's before he goes back to Oxford? Tobin is dead. But there is a man in my office, a Mr. Hedges, who proses it away from morning to night, and never gets beyond corporal and material verities. He'd get these crack-brain metaphysics out of the young gentleman's head as soon as any one I know. When I can't sleep o' nights, I imagine a dialogue with Mr. Hedges, upon any given subject, and go prosing on in fancy with him, till I either laugh or fall asleep. I have literally found it answer. I am going to stand godfather; I don't like the business; I cannot muster up decorum for these occasions;

I shall certainly disgrace the font. I was at Hazlitt's marriage, and had like to have been turned out several times during the ceremony. Anything awful makes me laugh. I misbehaved once at a funeral. Yet I can read about these ceremonies with pious and proper feelings. The realities of life only seem the mockeries. I fear I must get cured along with Hartley, if not too inveterate. Don't you think Louis the Desirable is in a sort of quandary?

After all, Buonaparte is a fine fellow, as my barber says, and I should not mind standing bareheaded at his table to do him service in his fall. They should have given him Hampton Court or Kensington, with a tether extending forty miles round London. Qu. Would not the people have ejected the Brunswicks some day in his favour? Well, we shall see.

C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CLXXV.] *August* 9, 1815.

Dear Wordsworth—We acknowledge with pride the receipt of both your handwritings, and desire to be ever had in kindly remembrance by you both and by Dorothy. Alsager, whom you call Alsinger (and indeed he is rather *singer* than *sager*, no reflection upon his naturals neither),

is well, and in harmony with himself and the world. I don't know how he, and those of his constitution, keep their nerves so nicely balanced as they do. Or, have they any? Or, are they made of packthread? He is proof against weather, ingratitude, meat underdone, every weapon of fate. I have just now a jagged end of a tooth pricking against my tongue, which meets it half way, in a wantonness of provocation; and there they go at it, the tongue pricking itself, like the viper against the file, and the tooth galling all the gum inside and out to torture; tongue and tooth, tooth and tongue, hard at it; and I to pay the reckoning, till all my mouth is as hot as brimstone; and I'd venture the roof of my mouth, that at this moment, at which I conjecture my full-happiness'd friend is picking his crackers, not one of the double rows of ivory in his privileged mouth has as much as a flaw in it, but all perform their functions, and, having performed them, expect to be picked (luxurious steeds!), and rubbed down. I don't think he could be robbed, or have the house set on fire, or ever want money. I have heard him express a similar opinion of his own impassibility. I keep acting here Heautontimorumenos.

Mr. Burney has been to Calais, and has come a travelled Monsieur. He speaks nothing but the Gallic Idiom. Field is on circuit. So now I believe I have given account of most that you saw at our Cabin.

Have you seen a curious letter in the *Morning Chronicle*, by C. L. [Capell Lofft], the genius of absurdity, respecting Buonaparte's suing out his Habeas Corpus? That man is his own moon. He has no need of ascending into that gentle planet for mild influences.

Mary and I felt quite queer after your taking leave (you W. W.) of us in St. Giles's. We wish we had seen more of you, but felt we had scarce been sufficiently acknowledging for the share we had enjoyed of your company. We felt as if we had been not enough *expressive* of our pleasure. But our manners *both* are a little too much on this side of too-much-cordiality. We want presence of mind and presence of heart. What we feel comes too late, like an after-thought impromptu. But perhaps you observed nothing of that which we have been painfully conscious of, and are every day in our intercourse with those we stand affected to through all the degrees of love. Robinson is on the circuit. Our panegyrist I thought had forgotten one of the objects of his youthful admiration, but I was agreeably removed from that scruple by the laundress knocking at my door this morning, almost before I was up, with a present of fruit from my young friend, etc. There is something inexpressibly pleasant to me in these *presents*, be it fruit, or fowl, or brawn, or *what not*. Books are a legitimate cause of acceptance. If presents be not the soul of friendship, un-

doubtedly they are the most spiritual part of the body of that intercourse. There is too much narrowness of thinking in this point. The punctilio of acceptance, methinks, is too confined and strait-laced. I could be content to receive money, or clothes, or a joint of meat from a friend. Why should he not send me a dinner as well as a dessert? I would taste him in the beasts of the field, and through all creation. Therefore did the basket of fruit of the juvenile Talfourd not displease me; not that I have any thoughts of bartering or reciprocating these things. To send him anything in return, would be to reflect suspicion of mercenariness upon what I know he meant a freewill offering. Let him overcome me in bounty. In this strife a generous nature loves to be overcome. You wish me some of your leisure. I have a glimmering aspect, a chink-light of liberty before me, which I pray God may prove not fallacious. My remonstrances have stirred up others to remonstrate, and altogether, there is a plan for separating certain parts of business from our department; which, if it take place, will produce me more time, *i.e.* my evenings free. It may be a means of placing me in a more conspicuous situation, which will knock at my nerves another way, but I wait the issue in submission. If I can but begin my own day at four o'clock in the afternoon, I shall think myself to have Eden days of peace and liberty to what I have had.

As you say, how a man can fill three volumes up with an essay on the drama is wonderful; I am sure a very few sheets would hold all I had to say on the subject.

Did you ever read "Charron on Wisdom"? or "Patrick's Pilgrim"? If neither, you have two great pleasures to come. I mean some day to attack Caryl on Job, six folios. What any man can write, surely I may read. If I do but get rid of auditing warehousekeepers' accounts and get no worse-harassing task in the place of it, what a lord of liberty I shall be! I shall dance and skip, and make mouths at the invisible event, and pick the thorns out of my pillow, and throw 'em at rich men's night-caps, and talk blank verse, hoity-toity, and sing—"A clerk I was in London gay," "Ban, ban, Ca-Caliban," like the emancipated monster, and go where I like, up this street or down that alley. Adieu, and pray that it may be my luck.

Good-bye to you all. C. LAMB.

To Miss HUTCHINSON

LETTER CLXXVI.] *Thursday, October* 19, 1815.

Dear Miss H.—I am forced to be the replier to your letter, for Mary has been ill, and gone from home these five weeks yesterday. She has left me very lonely and very miserable. I stroll

about, but there is no rest but at one's own fireside, and there is no rest for me there now. I look forward to the worse half being past, and keep up as well as I can. She has begun to show some favourable symptoms. The return of her disorder has been frightfully soon this time, with scarce a six months' interval. I am almost afraid my worry of spirits about the E. I. House was partly the cause of her illness, but one always imputes it to the cause next at hand; more probably it comes from some cause we have no control over or conjecture of. It cuts sad great slices out of the time, the little time, we shall have to live together. I don't know but the recurrence of these illnesses might help me to sustain her death better than if we had had no partial separations. But I won't talk of death. I will imagine us immortal, or forget that we are otherwise. By God's blessing, in a few weeks we may be making our meal together, or sitting in the front row of the Pit at Drury Lane, or taking our evening walk past the theatres, to look at the outside of them, at least, if not to be tempted in. Then we forget we are assailable; we are strong for the time as rocks;—"the wind is tempered to the shorn Lambs." Poor C. Lloyd, and poor Priscilla! I feel I hardly feel enough for him; my own calamities press about me, and involve me in a thick integument not to be reached at by other folks' misfortunes. But I feel all

I can—all the kindness I can, towards you all—God bless you! I hear nothing from Coleridge.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

To THOMAS MANNING

LETTER CLXXVII.] *December* 25, 1815.

Dear old Friend and absentee—This is Christmas Day 1815 with us; what it may be with you I don't know, the 12th of June next year perhaps; and if it should be the consecrated season with you, I don't see how you can keep it. You have no turkeys; you would not desecrate the festival by offering up a withered Chinese bantam, instead of the savoury grand Norfolcian holocaust, that smokes all around my nostrils at this moment from a thousand firesides. Then what puddings have you? Where will you get holly to stick in your churches, or churches to stick your dried tea-leaves (that must be the substitute) in? What memorials you can have of the holy time, I see not. A chopped missionary or two may keep up the thin idea of Lent and the wilderness; but what standing evidence have you of the Nativity? 'Tis our rosy-cheeked, homestalled divines, whose faces shine to the tune of "Unto us a child was born," faces fragrant with the

mince-pies of half a century, that alone can authenticate the cheerful mystery. I feel my bowels refreshed with the holy tide; my zeal is great against the unedified heathen. Down with the Pagodas—down with the idols—Ching-chong-fo—and his foolish priesthood! Come out of Babylon, O my friend! for her time is come; and the child that is native, and the Proselyte of her gates, shall kindle and smoke together! And in sober sense what makes you so long from among us, Manning? You must not expect to see the same England again which you left.

Empires have been overturned, crowns trodden into dust, the face of the western world quite changed. Your friends have all got old—those you left blooming; myself (who am one of the few that remember you), those golden hairs which you recollect my taking a pride in, turned to silvery and gray. Mary has been dead and buried many years: she desired to be buried in the silk gown you sent her. Rickman, that you remember active and strong, now walks out supported by a servant maid and a stick. Martin Burney is a very old man. The other day an aged woman knocked at my door, and pretended to my acquaintance. It was long before I had the most distant cognition of her; but at last, together, we made her out to be Louisa, the daughter of Mrs. Topham, formerly Mrs. Morton, who had been Mrs. Reynolds, formerly

Mrs. Kenney, whose first husband was Holcroft, the dramatic writer of the last century. St. Paul's Church is a heap of ruins; the Monument isn't half so high as you knew it, divers parts being successively taken down which the ravages of time had rendered dangerous; the horse at Charing Cross is gone, no one knows whither; and all this has taken place while you have been settling whether Ho-hing-tong should be spelt with a ——, or a ——. For aught I see you might almost as well remain where you are, and not come like a Struldbrug into a world where few were born when you went away. Scarce here and there one will be able to make out your face. All your opinions will be out of date, your jokes obsolete, your puns rejected with fastidiousness as wit of the last age. Your way of mathematics has already given way to a new method, which after all is I believe the old doctrine of Maclaurin, new-vamped up with what he borrowed of the negative quantity of fluxions from Euler.

Poor Godwin! I was passing his tomb the other day in Cripplegate churchyard. There are some verses upon it written by Miss ——, which if I thought good enough I would send you. He was one of those who would have hailed your return, not with boisterous shouts and clamours, but with the complacent gratulations of a philosopher anxious to promote knowledge as leading to happiness; but his

systems and his theories are ten feet deep in Cripplegate mould. Coleridge is just dead, having lived just long enough to close the eyes of Wordsworth, who paid the debt to Nature but a week or two before. Poor Col., but two days before he died he wrote to a bookseller, proposing an epic poem on the "Wanderings of Cain," in twenty-four books. It is said he has left behind him more than forty thousand treatises in criticism, metaphysics, and divinity, but few of them in a state of completion. They are now destined, perhaps, to wrap up spices. You see what mutations the busy hand of Time has produced, while you have consumed in foolish voluntary exile that time which might have gladdened your friends—benefited your country; but reproaches are useless. Gather up the wretched reliques, my friend, as fast as you can, and come to your old home. I will rub my eyes and try to recognise you. We will shake withered hands together, and talk of old things—of St. Mary's Church and the barber's opposite, where the young students in mathematics used to assemble. Poor Crips, that kept it afterwards, set up a fruiterer's shop in Trumpington Street, and for aught I know resides there still, for I saw the name up in the last journey I took there with my sister just before she died. I suppose you heard that I had left the India House, and gone into the Fishmongers' Almshouses over the bridge. I

have a little cabin there, small and homely, but you shall be welcome to it. You like oysters, and to open them yourself; I'll get you some if you come in oyster time. Marshall, Godwin's old friend, is still alive, and talks of the faces you used to make.

Come as soon as you can. C. LAMB.

LETTER CLXXVIII.] *December* 26, 1815.

Dear Manning—Following your brother's example, I have just ventured one letter to Canton, and am now hazarding another (not exactly a duplicate) to St. Helena. The first was full of unprobable romantic fictions, fitting the remoteness of the mission it goes upon; in the present I mean to confine myself nearer to truth as you come nearer home. A correspondence with the uttermost parts of the earth necessarily involves in it some heat of fancy; it sets the brain agoing, but I can think on the half-way house tranquilly. Your friends then are not all dead or grown forgetful of you through old age, as that lying letter asserted, anticipating rather what must happen if you kept tarrying on for ever on the skirts of creation, as there seemed a danger of your doing; but they are all tolerably well and in full and perfect comprehension of what is meant by Manning's coming home again. Mrs. Kenney never lets her tongue run riot more than in

remembrances of you. Fanny expends herself in phrases that can only be justified by her romantic nature. Mary reserves a portion of your silk, not to be buried in (as the false nuncio asserts), but to make up spick and span into a bran-new gown to wear when you come. I am the same as when you knew me, almost to a surfeiting identity. This very night I am going to *leave off tobacco !* Surely there must be some other world in which this unconquerable purpose shall be realised. The soul hath not her generous aspirings implanted in her in vain. One that you knew, and I think the only one of those friends we knew much of in common, has died in earnest. Poor Priscilla ! Her brother Robert is also dead, and several of the grown-up brothers and sisters, in the compass of a very few years. Death has not otherwise meddled much in families that I know. Not but he has his eye upon us, and is whetting his feathered dart every instant, as you see him truly pictured in that impressive moral picture, "The good man at the hour of death." I have in trust to put in the post four letters from Diss, and one from Lynn, to St. Helena, which I hope will accompany this safe, and one from Lynn, and the one before spoken of from me, to Canton. But we all hope that these letters may be waste paper. I don't know why I have forborne writing so long ; but it is such a forlorn hope to send a scrap of paper straggling over

wide oceans! And yet I know, when you come home, I shall have you sitting before me at our fireside just as if you had never been away. In such an instant does the return of a person dissipate all the weight of imaginary perplexity from distance of time and space! I'll promise you good oysters. Corry is dead that kept the shop opposite St. Dunstan's; but the tougher materials of the shop survive the perishing frame of its keeper. Oysters continue to flourish there under as good auspices. Poor Corry! but if you will absent yourself twenty years together, you must not expect numerically the same population to congratulate your return which wetted the sea-beach with their tears when you went away. Have you recovered the breathless stone-staring astonishment into which you must have been thrown upon learning at landing that an Emperor of France was living in St. Helena? What an event in the solitude of the seas! like finding a fish's bone at the top of Plinlimmon; but these things are nothing in our western world. Novelties cease to affect. Come and try what your presence can.

God bless you.—Your old friend,

C. LAMB.

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LETTER CLXXIX.] *April* 9, 1816.

Dear Wordsworth—Thanks for the books you have given me and for all the books you mean to give me. I will bind up the Political Sonnets and Ode according to your suggestion. I have not bound the poems yet. I wait till people have done borrowing them. I think I shall get a chain and chain them to my shelves, *more Bodleiano*, and people may come and read them at chain's length. For of those who borrow, some read slow; some mean to read but don't read; and some neither read nor meant to read, but borrow to leave you an opinion of their sagacity. I must do my money-borrowing friends the justice to say that there is nothing of this caprice or wantonness of alienation in them. When they borrow my money they never fail to make use of it. Coleridge has been here about a fortnight. His health is tolerable at present, though beset with temptations. In the first place, the Covent Garden Manager has declined accepting his Tragedy, though (having read it) I see no reason upon earth why it might not have run a very fair chance, though it certainly wants a prominent part for a Miss O'Neil or a Mr. Kean. However, he is going to-day to write to Lord Byron to get it to Drury. Should you see Mrs. C., who has just written

to C. a letter, which I have given him, it will be as well to say nothing about its fate, till some answer is shaped from Drury. He has two volumes printing together at Bristol, both finished as far as the composition goes; the latter containing his fugitive poems, the former his Literary Life. Nature, who conducts every creature, by instinct, to its best end, has skilfully directed C. to take up his abode at a Chemist's Laboratory in Norfolk Street. She might as well have sent a *Helluo Librorum* for cure to the Vatican. God keep him inviolate among the traps and pitfalls! He has done pretty well as yet.

Tell Miss H[utchinson] my sister is every day wishing to be quietly sitting down to answer her very kind letter, but while C. stays she can hardly find a quiet time; God bless him!

Tell Mrs. W. her postscripts are always agreeable. They are so legible too. Your manualgraphy is terrible, dark as Lycophron. "Likelihood," for instance, is thus typified . . . . I should not wonder if the constant making out of such paragraphs is the cause of that weakness in Mrs. W.'s eyes, as she is tenderly pleased to express it. Dorothy, I hear, has mounted spectacles; so you have deoculated two of your dearest relations in life. Well, God bless you, and continue to give you power to write with a finger of power upon our hearts what you fail to impress, in corresponding lucidness, upon our outward eyesight!

Mary's love to all; she is quite well.

I am called off to do the deposits on Cotton Wool; but why do I relate this to you, who want faculties to comprehend the great mystery of deposits, of interests, of warehouse rent, and contingent fund? Adieu! C. LAMB.

A longer letter when C. is gone back into the country, relating his success, etc.—*my* judgment of *your* new books, etc. etc.—I am scarce quiet enough while he stays.

Yours again, C. L.

LETTER CLXXX.] *Accountant's Office, April* 26, 1816.

Dear W.—I have just finished the pleasing task of correcting the revise of the poems and letter. I hope they will come out faultless. One blunder I saw and shuddered at. The hallucinating rascal had printed *battered* for *battened*, this last not conveying any distinct sense to his gaping soul. The Reader (as they call 'em) had discovered it, and given it the marginal brand, but the substitutory *n* had not yet appeared. I accompanied his notice with a most pathetic address to the printer not to neglect the correction. I know how such a blunder would "batter at your peace." With regard to the works, the Letter I read with unabated satisfaction. Such a thing was wanted—called for. The parallel of Cotton with Burns I heartily

approve. Izaak Walton hallows any page in which his reverend name appears. "Duty archly bending to purposes of general benevolence" is exquisite. The poems I endeavoured not to understand, but to read them with my eye alone, and I think I succeeded. (Some people will do that when they come out, you'll say.) As if I were to luxuriate to-morrow at some picture gallery I was never at before, and going by to-day by chance, found the door open, and had but five minutes to look about me, peeped in; just such a *chastised* peep I took with my mind at the lines my luxuriating eye was coursing over unrestrained, not to anticipate another day's fuller satisfaction. Coleridge is printing "Christabel," by Lord Byron's recommendation to Murray, with what he calls a vision, "Kubla Khan," which said vision he repeats so enchantingly that it irradiates and brings heaven and elysian bowers into my parlour while he sings or says it; but there is an observation, "Never tell thy dreams," and I am almost afraid that "Kubla Khan" is an owl that won't bear daylight. I fear lest it should be discovered by the lantern of typography and clear reducting to letters no better than nonsense or no sense. When I was young I used to chant with ecstasy "MILD ARCADIANS EVER BLOOMING," till somebody told me it was meant to be nonsense. Even yet I have a lingering attachment to it, and I think it better than "Windsor Forest," "Dying Christian's

Address," etc. Coleridge has sent his tragedy to D[rury] L[ane] T[heatre]. It cannot be acted this season; and by their manner of receiving, I hope he will be able to alter it to make them accept it for next. He is, at present, under the medical care of a Mr. Gillman (Killman?) a Highgate apothecary, where he plays at leaving off laud—m. I think his essentials not touched: he is very bad; but then he wonderfully picks up another day, and his face, when he repeats his verses, hath its ancient glory; an archangel a little damaged. Will Miss H. pardon our not replying at length to her kind letter? We are not quiet enough; Morgan is with us every day, going betwixt Highgate and the Temple. Coleridge is absent but four miles, and the neighbourhood of such a man is as exciting as the presence of fifty ordinary persons. 'Tis enough to be within the whiff and wind of his genius for us not to possess our souls in quiet. If I lived with him or the Author of the *Excursion*, I should, in a very little time, lose my own identity, and be dragged along in the current of other people's thoughts, hampered in a net. How cool I sit in this office, with no possible interruption further than what I may term *material!* There is not as much metaphysics in thirty-six of the people here as there is in the first page of Locke's "Treatise on the Human Understanding," or as much poetry as in any ten lines of the "Pleasures of Hope," or

more natural "Beggar's Petition." I never entangle myself in any of their speculations. Interruptions, if I try to write a letter even, I have dreadful. Just now, within four lines, I was called off for ten minutes to consult dusty old books for the settlement of obsolete errors. I hold you a guinea you don't find the chasm where I left off, so excellently the wounded sense closed again and was healed.

N.B.—Nothing said above to the contrary, but that I hold the personal presence of the two mentioned potent spirits at a rate as high as any; but I pay dearer. What amuses others robs me of myself: my mind is positively discharged into their greater currents, but flows with a willing violence. As to your question about work, it is far less oppressive to me than it was, from circumstances. It takes all the golden part of the day away, a solid lump, from ten to four; but it does not kill my peace as before. Some day or other I shall be in a taking again. My head aches, and you have had enough. God bless you! C. LAMB.

To MISS MATILDA BETHAM

LETTER CLXXXI.] *East India House, June* 1, 1816.

Dear Miss Betham—All this while I have been tormenting myself with the thought of having been ungracious to you, and you have

been all the while accusing yourself. Let us absolve one another, and be quiet. My head is in such a state from incapacity for business that I certainly know it to be my duty not to undertake the veriest trifle in addition. I hardly know how I can go on. I have tried to get some redress by explaining my health, but with no great success. No one can tell how ill I am because it does not come out to the exterior of my face, but lies in my skull, deep and invisible. I wish I was leprous, and black jaundiced skin over, and that all was as well within as my cursed looks. You must not think me worse than I am. I am determined not to be overset, but to give up business rather, and get 'em to allow me a trifle for services past. Oh! that I had been a shoemaker, or a baker, or a man of large independent fortune! Oh! darling laziness! heaven of Epicurus! Saint's Everlasting Rest! that I could drink vast potations of thee thro' unmeasured Eternity — Otium *cum*, vel *sine* dignitate. Scandalous, dishonourable — any kind of *repose*. I stand not upon the dignified sort. Accursed, damned desks, trade, commerce, business! Inventions of the old original busybody, brain-working Satan—Sabbathless, restless Satan! A curse relieves: do you ever try it?

A strange letter to write to a lady; but more honeyed sentences will not distil. I dare not ask who revises in my stead. I have drawn you into a scrape and am ashamed; but I know no remedy.

My unwellness must be my apology. God bless you (tho' He curse the India House, and fire it *to the ground*), and may no unkind error creep into "Marie"! May all its readers like it as well as I do, and everybody about you like its kind author no worse! Why the devil am I never to have a chance of scribbling my own free thoughts, verse or prose, again? Why must I write of tea and drugs, and price goods and the bales of indigo?—Farewell. C. LAMB.

Mary goes to her place on Sunday—I mean your maid, foolish Mary; she wants a very little brains only to be an excellent servant; she is excellently calculated for the country, where nobody has brains.

Have you seen "Christabel" since its publication?

To H. DODWELL

LETTER CLXXXII.] *July* 1816.

My dear fellow—I have been in a lethargy this long while, and forgotten London, Westminster, Marybone, Paddington—they all went clean out of my head, till happening to go to a neighbor's in this good borough of Calne, for want of whist players, we fell upon *Commerce:* the word awoke me to a remembrance of my professional avocations and the long-continued

strife which I have been these 24 years endeavoring to compose between those grand Irreconcileables Cash and Commerce ; I instantly called for an almanack, which with some difficulty was procured at a fortune-teller's in the vicinity (for the happy holyday people here having nothing to do, keep no account of time), and found that by dint of duty I must attend in Leadenhall on Wednesy. morning next, and shall attend accordingly. Does Master Hannah give macaroons still, and does he fetch the Cobbetts from my Attic ? Perhaps it wouldn't be too much trouble for him to drop the inclosed up at my aforesaid Chamber, and any letters, etc., with it ; but the inclosed should go without delay. *N.B.*—He isn't to fetch Monday's Cobbett, but it is to wait my reading when I come back. Heigh Ho ! Lord have mercy upon me, how many does two and two make ? I am afraid I shall make a poor clerk in future, I am spoiled with rambling among haycocks and cows and pigs. Bless me ! I had like to have forgot (the air is so temperate and oblivious here) to say I have seen your brother, and hope he is doing well in the finest spot of the world. More of these things when I return. Remember me to the gentlemen,—I forget names. Shall I find all my letters at my rooms on Tuesday ? If you forgot to send 'em never mind, for I don't much care for reading and writing now ; I shall come back again by degrees, I suppose, into my former habits. How

is Bruce de Ponthieu, and Porcher and Co. ?—the tears come into my eyes when I think how long I have neglected——.

Adieu ! ye fields, ye shepherds and—herdesses, and dairies and cream-pots, and fairies and dances upon the green.

I come, I come. Don't drag me so hard by the hair of my head, Genius of British India ! I know my hour is come, Faustus must give up his soul, O Lucifer, O Mephistopheles ! Can you make out what all this letter is about ? I am afraid to look it over. CH. LAMB.

Calne, Wilts, Friday,
July something, old style, 1816.

No new style here, all the styles are old, and some of the gates too for that matter.

[Addressed] H. Dodwell, Esq.,
India House, London.

In his absence may be opened by Mr. Chambers.

NOTES

CHAPTER II—(*Continued*)

1800—1809

LETTER LXXXIII (p. 9).—*The Preface must be expunged.* In the British Museum is Lamb's copy of Dyer's Poems. It contains the cancelled preface, and on the margin of advertisement, explaining how the book begins at p. lxix. instead of p. i., Lamb has written, "One copy of this cancelled Preface, snatched out of the fire, is prefixed to this volume." The cancelled preface ran to sixty-six pages, not eighty, as Lamb says to Manning. Writing to G. C. Bedford, 22nd March 1817, respecting one of his books then printing, Southey says, "Now, pray, be speedy with the cancels. On such an occasion Lamb gave G. Dyer the title of *Cancellarius Magnus.*" (*Letters of R. S.* i. 428.) For this interesting reference I am indebted to my friend Mr. J. Dykes Campbell.

LETTER LXXXIV (p. 12).—*Miss Wesley.* Daughter of Samuel and niece of John Wesley. "Eccentric but estimable," says H. Crabb Robinson in Diary, 27th May 1812.

One Miss Benjay. Miss Elizabeth Benger, authoress of various poems and histories. See *Dictionary of National Biography*, iv. 221.

LETTER LXXXV (p. 17).—*Barbara Lewthwaite.* The little heroine of Wordsworth's poem "The Pet Lamb."

LETTER LXXXVI (p. 19).—The "second volume" that Lamb had borrowed was the second volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*, then just published. The "Song of Lucy" is clearly the famous lyric beginning—

"She dwelt among the untrodden ways."

Lamb's criticism on the second title of the "Ancient Mariner" proved effectual in the end, but the title was retained until the publication of the *Sibylline Leaves* in 1817. The stanzas referred to by Lamb as "The Mad Mother," are those beginning with the words, "Her eyes are wild." Wordsworth in later editions dropped the original title.

I totally differ from your idea. Wordsworth had appended a note to the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (vol. i.), expressing his opinion on the *Ancient Mariner*, and the probable causes of its failure to please. The note is of such singular interest, and so little known, that I make no apology for giving it in full.

"*Note to the Ancient Mariner*, p. 155.—I cannot refuse myself the gratification of informing such Readers as may have been pleased with this Poem, or with any part of it, that they owe their pleasure in some sort to me; as the Author was himself very desirous that it should be suppressed. This wish had arisen from a consciousness of the defects of the Poem, and from a knowledge that many persons had been much displeased with it. The Poem of my Friend has indeed grave defects; first, that the principal person has no distinct character, either in his profession of mariner, or as a human being who, having been long under the control of supernatural impressions, might be supposed himself to partake of something supernatural; secondly, that he does not act, but is continually acted upon; thirdly, that the events, having no necessary connection, do not produce each other; and, lastly, that the imagery is somewhat too laboriously accumulated. Yet the Poem contains many delicate touches of passion, and indeed the passion is everywhere true to nature; a great number of the stanzas present beautiful images, and are expressed with unusual felicity of language; and the versification, though the metre is itself unfit for long poems, is harmonious and artfully varied, exhibiting the utmost powers of that metre, and every variety of

which it is capable. It therefore appeared to me that these several merits (the first of which, namely, that of the passion, is of the highest kind) gave to the Poem a value which is not often possessed by better Poems. On this account I requested of my Friend to permit me to republish it."

The coarse epithet of "pin-point." In the first version of the *Poet's Epitaph*, the line to which we are now accustomed—

"Thy ever-dwindling soul away,"

ran thus :—

"Thy pin-point of a soul away."

LETTER LXXXVIII (p. 25).—The greater portion of this letter was in my former edition printed in the Notes. It is now included in the Text, and a delightful paragraph about George Dyer is now printed for the first time.

LETTER LXXXIX (p. 30).—*George Dyer's Poems:* Longman and Rees, 1801. The passage about Shakspeare from the long poem called "Poetic Sympathies" in this volume, beginning—

"Yet, muse of Shakspeare, whither wouldst thou fly
With hurried step, and dove-like, trembling eye?"

is hardly worth quoting further, but may be referred to by the curious.

John Stoddart, Esq. John, afterwards Sir John, Stoddart, was the brother of Mrs. William Hazlitt (the *first* W. H.) He was a writer in the *Times*—quarrelled with Walter, and set up the *New Times*, a short-lived venture, and went to Malta, where he was Chief Justice. While there he invited S. T. Coleridge to visit him, and the invitation was accepted.

My back tingles from the northern castigation. This alludes, of course, to the letter to Wordsworth of Feb. 15, 1801.

I am going to change my lodgings. The Lambs were now about to leave Southampton Buildings (see Letter LXIX) for Mitre Court Buildings, in the Temple, destined to be their home for the next eight years.

LETTER XCI (p. 38).—Baron Maseres, Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer. See the Elia Essay, "The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple."

LETTER XCV (p. 46). — *Walter Wilson*, bookseller, and afterwards writer, best known as the author of the *Memoirs of Defoe*, to which Lamb was later to contribute some interesting critical matter.

LETTER XCVI (p. 47).—See Lamb's Essay on "Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago," and the note upon it in this edition. He there tells us that this epigram gave the unfortunate *Albion* its *coup de grâce*.

LETTER XCVIII (p. 52). — *Your story*. The story of Godwin's later play of *Faulkener* would seem to be indicated here. That play was built upon Defoe's *Roxana*, and Lamb here suggests that the strange history of Richard Savage's parentage might advantageously be borrowed. *Faulkener* was not produced till 1807, and then unsuccessfully. The following letter evidently refers to the plot of the same proposed drama.

LETTER C (p. 58).—*My Play*, "John Woodvil." The copy sent to Manning, mainly in the handwriting of Mary Lamb, with various omissions marked and corrections added in the handwriting of Charles, is before me, kindly lent by Mr. C. R. Manning of Diss. In the inside cover of the MS. is pasted a sheet of paper, on which Lamb has written as follows:—

Mind this goes for a letter. (Acknowledge it *directly*, if only in ten words.)

Dear Manning—(I shall want to hear this comes safe.) I have scratched out a good deal, as you will see. Generally, what I have rejected was either *false* in *feeling*, or a violation of character—mostly of the first sort. I will here just instance in the concluding few lines of the "Dying Lover's Story," which completely contradicted his character of *silent* and *unreproachful*. I hesitated a good deal what copy to send you, and at last resolved to send the worst, because you are familiar with it, and can make it out; and a stranger would find so much difficulty in doing it, that it would give him more pain than pleasure.

This is compounded precisely of the two persons' hands you requested it should be.—Yours sincerely, C. LAMB.

I will now transcribe the "Londoner." I have printed this letter, with the accompanying note by Talfourd, but in point of fact the "Londoner" was never published in the *Reflector*. See *Poems, Plays, and Essays.*

LETTER CIII (p. 63).—This letter is written to Coleridge on the return of Charles and Mary from paying him a holiday visit at Keswick. Thomas Clarkson was then residing in a cottage on Ulswater. See following letter to Manning.

LETTER CV (p. 65).—*Fenwick is a ruined man.* See *Elia Essays*, "The Two Races of Men," and "Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago."

Fell, my other drunken companion. Mr. Ralph Fell, author of a *Tour through the Batavian Republic* — according to Southey, a "dull book."

LETTER CVI (p. 70).—The first of several letters in this correspondence written in Latin; and in the present instance, as would appear, in reply to a challenge from Coleridge. The letter as hitherto printed is full of certain mistakes for which Lamb is clearly not responsible. These I have ventured to correct, but I have not thought it desirable to amend the Latinity otherwise in passages where it is certainly not immaculate. The grammar and idiom are frequently so lax as to jeopardise the writer's meaning, but with the assistance of my friend Dr. Calvert of Shrewsbury, I hope I have disentangled most of Lamb's somewhat involved allusions. The letter is interesting as bearing reference to several events of interest in the lives of both Coleridge and Wordsworth. It bears date October 9, 1802. A few days earlier, on October 2, Wordsworth had been married to Mary Hutchinson. On the same day (possibly by mere coincidence) Coleridge had printed in the *Morning Post* the first version of his splendid Ode, entitled "Dejection." In this version the person addressed throughout is a certain "Edmund," and not, as in the later revision of the poem, the "Lady," addressed in the often quoted lines—

> "O Lady, we receive but what we give,
> And in *our* Life alone does Nature live."

That "Edmund," the writer's dearest friend and a great

poet, could be no other than Wordsworth we might be sure from internal evidence, even if we had not in this letter a curious confirmation. The *Carmina Chamouniana* refer to Coleridge's "Hymn before Sunrise, in the Vale of Chamouni," then recently printed for the first time in the *Morning Post*. Lamb's allusions will be intelligible to those who recall the passage beginning—

> "Who bade the sun
> Clothe you with rainbows? Who with living flowers
> Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?
> God! God! the torrents, like a shout of nations,
> Utter! the ice-plain bursts, and answers God!"

Although hitherto printed by Lamb's editors, *Tod, Tod*, the reading, I am convinced, should be *Dodd, Dodd*. There is a mountain near Skiddaw called *Skiddaw Dodd*, which Lamb doubtless remembered. Furthermore, the crime and punishment of "the unhappy Doctor," bearing the same name, was fresh in the memory of many persons then living.

The comparisons of the First Consul with the Roman Emperors refer to a series of Essays then recently published by Coleridge in the *Morning Post*. They are reprinted in the *Essays on his own Times*: Pickering, 1850 (vol. ii. pp. 478-514). The allusion to the *Ludus Americanus* must perhaps remain unsolved. The "Flying Opossum" was little Derwent Coleridge, then just entering his third year. The child's vain attempts to pronounce the name of this creature in his picture-book, to which he never attained nearer than "Pi-pos," had fastened this nickname upon the little fellow. "Pi-pos" will recur in many of the succeeding letters.

I append a translation, partly paraphrased, of the entire letter:—

My very dear Friend—"Pay the post, and go to ——" you say; *i.e.* to Tartarus. Nay! but have *you* not rather caught a Tartar? Here have I, for all these years, used my vernacular with (for a writing-clerk) passable elegance; and yet you are bent on goading me on with your neat and masterly letter, to yelp an answer in such dog-Latin as I may. However, I will try, though afraid my outlandish and far-fetched barbarisms will bring disgrace upon Christ's Hospital, the

school still so proud of its learned Barnes and Markland, where in days gone by a wrong-headed master perseveringly drenched me with classical lore. But I must go on as best I can. Come then at my call, all ye troops of conjugations or declensions! horrible spectres! and come first and foremost thou—mightiest shadow and image of the Rod—now thank Heaven a thing of the past, the thought of which makes me howl as though I were a boy again!

Your lines written at Chamouni I certainly think very noble, but your English rendering of the echo among the Grisons (*God! God!*) rather jars upon me. I cannot forget that in your own Cumbrian mountains I heard you rouse the echo (Dodd! Dodd!) of the unfortunate Doctor's name, a sound by no means divine! As to the rest, I entirely approve.

Your comparisons also I recognise fully as witty and wise. But how about their truth? I find you asserting in one breath quite inconsistently, merely for comparison's sake, that the First Consul is endowed with the "irritable mind" of Julius Cæsar, as well as with a "constitutional coolness and politic craft" more appropriate to Augustus: and then in the third place you have taken much trouble to extract a resemblance to Tiberius. Why deal with one or two Cæsars when the whole Twelve are only too ready to offer you their services for comparison? Besides I respect antiquity too much not to detest unfair parallels.

I am wonderfully pleased to have your account of the marriage of Wordsworth, or perhaps I should say of a certain "Edmund" of yours. All blessings rest on thee, Mary! too happy in thy lot. . . . I wish thee also joy in this new alliance, Dorothy—truly so named, that other "gift of God."

The American "Ludus" of which you prattle so much, Coleridge, I pass over, as utterly abhorrent from a "Ludus" (as such things go). For tell me, what "fun" is there in estranging from ourselves, sprung from the same stock (for the sake of one miserable *jeu d'esprit*), the whole of the Columbian nation. I ask you for a subject for something "Sportive," and you offer me "Bloody Wars."

To wind up, good-bye, and let me know what you think of my Latin style; and wish for me all health and beauty to my "Flying Opossum," or as you prefer to call him the "Odd

Fish." Best greetings to your wife and my good Hartley. We are well, self and sister, who desires her best wishes. No more at present. My time is not my own.

I had almost forgotten to tell you that I have two volumes of John Milton's Latin Works, which (*D.V.*) I will have sent with the rest of your books sooner or later by Mary. You know, however, that in such matters I am by no means in the habit of hurrying; and I plead guilty. I have only to say further that they are handsome volumes, containing all J. M.'s Latin works. I am just now myself engaged and deeply interested in his very spirited Apology for the People of England.

I will carefully observe your instructions about Stuart. Good-bye, once more; and O remember me.

LETTER CVII (p. 73).—*Your offer about the German poems.* Coleridge was to translate some of the best German lyrics into literal prose, and Lamb was then to turn them into verse. One experiment of the kind is Lamb's version of Thekla's Song in "Wallenstein." See *Poems, Plays, and Essays.*

Your "Epigram on the Sun and Moon." An epigram of Coleridge's contributed this month to the *Morning Post*:—"On the curious circumstance that in the German language the sun is feminine and the moon masculine."

Allen. The schoolfellow of Coleridge and Lamb at Christ's Hospital. Robert Allen went to University College, Oxford, in 1792—the year after Coleridge went to Jesus College, Cambridge. Coleridge visited Allen at Oxford in June 1794, and was introduced by him to Southey. Allen was one of the original Pantisocrats. He was very handsome. See anecdote of him in the Elia Essay, "Christ's Hospital five and thirty years ago."

LETTER CVIII (p. 75).—"*Once a Jacobin.*" An essay of Coleridge's in the *Morning Post* for October 1802. "Once a Jacobin, always a Jacobin." *Essays on his own Times*, ii. p. 542.

Sam Le Grice. Lamb's schoolfellow at Christ's Hospital. See Elia Essay, "Christ's Hospital five and thirty years ago," and my notes thereon.

LETTER CIX (p. 79).—S. T. C.'s first letter to Mr. Fox was published in the *Morning Post* of Thursday, November 4,

1802. A second followed on November 9. Both are included in the *Essays on his own Times*, vol. ii.

LETTER CX (p. 81).—Joseph Cottle, the bookseller and publisher, was also, like his brother Amos, a poet. He produced *Malvern Hills* in 1798.

Alfred, an epic poem, in 1801.

LETTER CXI (p. 83).—*A merry natural captain.* Captain, afterwards Admiral Burney, who sailed with Captain Cook in two of his voyages.

LETTER CXII (p. 87)—*On the death of a young Quaker.* See the beautiful verses entitled "Hester" (*Poems, Plays*, etc.). Miss Emma Savory of Blackheath, a niece of Hester Savory, has kindly supplied me with a few biographical details. "She (Hester) was the eldest sister of my father, A. B. Savory, and lived with him and his sisters, Anna and Martha, at Pentonville. She married Charles Stoke Dudley, and died, eight months after her marriage, of fever. I possess a miniature portrait of her which I greatly value. My mother used to say that her beauty consisted more in expression than in regularity of features." I may add that I have seen this miniature which, even after reading Lamb's tender and beautiful lyric, is anything but disappointing. It is a bright-eyed gypsy face such as we know so well from the canvas of Reynolds. Miss Savory adds, "I do not think our mother was aware of Charles Lamb's attachment to Hester Savory. Perhaps she did not know it herself."

LETTER CXIII (p. 87).—This letter refers to the third edition (1803) of Coleridge's Poems, which he had placed in Lamb's hands for revision. The poem called "The Silver Thimble" is that already referred to, in which Sara Coleridge had some small share. The verses on "Flicker and Flicker's Wife" were entitled simply, "Written after a Walk before Supper." They open thus—

> "Tho' much averse, dear Jack, to flicker,
> To find a likeness for friend V—ker,
> I've made this Earth and air and sea
> A voyage of Discovery!

And let me add (to ward off strife),
For V—ker, and for V—ker's wife."

Lamb's habitual inaccuracy comes out here also. As for the omission of this *jeu d'esprit* in the forthcoming edition, no one will be found to dissent from his judgment.

LETTER CXV (p. 92).—This letter is addressed to "Mr. T. Manning, Maison Magnan, No. 342 Boulevard Italien, Paris."

An epitaph scribbled upon a poor girl. Written upon a young lady of the name of Mary Druitt, at Wimborne, Dorsetshire. This was done at the request of John Rickman. Lamb was not personally acquainted with the girl, but wrote the lines on Rickman's description. The late Mr. J. P. Collier gives a slightly different version of the lines in his "Old Man's Diary" (privately printed). Mr. Collier says that the girl died at the age of nineteen, of smallpox, and that the lines were engraved upon the tomb; but I learn from members of the Druitt family still living at Wimborne that this latter statement is not correct.

In an unpublished letter to Rickman of February 1, 1802, Lamb writes as follows, suggesting an entirely new epitaph, of real beauty:—

"Your own prose, or nakedly the letter which you sent me, which was in some sort an epitaph, would do better on her gravestone than the cold lines of a stranger:—

A Heart which felt unkindness, yet complained not,
A Tongue which spake the simple Truth, and feigned not:
A Soul as white as the pure marble skin
(The beauteous Mansion it was lodgèd in)
Which, unrespected, could itself respect,
  On Earth was all the Portion of a Maid
  Who in this common Sanctuary laid
Sleeps unoffended by the World's neglect."

LETTER CXIX (p. 99).—Lamb's animadversions upon Godwin's lengthy *Life of Chaucer* are as usual admirably just. The work consisted of four-fifths ingenious guessing to one-fifth of material having any historic basis.

Schoolboy copy of verses for Merchant Taylors' boys. The boys were allowed to get help from outside in the composition of

their weekly epigrams. In later years we find him making some for the late Archdeacon Hessey and his brother, when at that school.

LETTER CXXVI (p. 115).—*Farewell to my "Friendly Traitress."* The "Farewell to Tobacco." First published in Leigh Hunt's *Reflector* in 1811, and afterwards in Lamb's collected works in 1818. See *Poems*, *Plays*, etc.

LETTER CXXVII (p. 118).—*Mr. Dawe.* See the paper by Lamb, written long afterwards, "Recollections of a late Royal Academician." (*Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc.).

Lord Nelson, died October 21, 1805.

Luck to Ned Search. The Light of Nature, by Edward Search, Esq., was a work by Abraham Tucker, which Hazlitt was at this time engaged in abridging and editing. His abridgment appeared in 1807.

The American Farmer. Letters from an American Farmer, Philadelphia, 1774, by Hector St. John Crevecœur.

LETTER CXXIX (p. 123).—*Life of Fawcett.* "Report was rife that a life of the Rev. Joseph Fawcett, Mr. Hazlitt's early friend, might be expected from the same quarter; but such was not the fact" (*Memoir of Hazlitt*, by his Grandson). Fawcett was a dissenting minister at Walthamstow, who published various *Sermons*, *Poems*, etc.

LETTER CXXXIV (p. 132).—Addressed:—"Mr. Manning, Passenger on Board the *Thames*, East Indiaman, Portsmouth." A short postscript to this letter was omitted by Talfourd:—"One thing more, when you get to Canton you will most likely see a young friend of mine, Inspector of Teas, named Ball. He is a very good fellow, and I should like to have my name talked of in China. Give my kind remembrances to the same Ball."

LETTER CXXXVI (p. 136).—*The good news of Mrs. W.* Wordsworth's son Thomas was born on the 16th of June 1806.

Mr. H. See *Poems*, *Plays*, etc., and note.

A young gentleman of my office. We shall have occasion hereafter to mention this fellow-clerk of Lamb's. For an

account of Coleridge's early passion for Evans's sister Mary, see Gillman's *Life of Coleridge* and Cottle's *Reminiscences*.

LETTER CXLI (p. 151).—*The Tales from Shakspeare*. The plates referred to by Lamb were designed (as is believed) by William Mulready, then a young man of twenty, and engraved by William Blake. The "bad Baby" was a familiar nickname for Mrs. Godwin. The subject from the *Merchant of Venice* was lettered, "Gratiano and Nerissa desire to be married"; the illustration to the *Midsummer Night's Dream* bore for title "Nic Bottom and the Fairies." In spite of Lamb's objection to this latter, it is by far the best of all the illustrations, both in design and drawing, and indicates very clearly the hand of Blake. The "giants and giantesses" of whom Lamb complains are certainly too frequent in these illustrations.

LETTER CXLII (p. 153).—The story of William Hazlitt's disappearance, which caused anxiety to his family, will be found in the *Memoir of Hazlitt*, by his grandson (chapter xi.).

LETTER CXLIII (p. 154).—Talfourd omitted a few sentences from this letter, which may as well be restored. "Godwin keeps a shop in Skinner Street, Cornhill; he is termed children's bookseller, and sells penny, twopenny, threepenny, and fourpenny books. Sometimes he gets an order for the dearer sort of books (mind, all that I tell you in this letter is true)."

As the boys followed Tom the Piper. Edward FitzGerald, in a letter to Mr. Aldis Wright of March 1878, writes, apropos of this passage: "I had not thought who Tom was: rather acquiesced in some idea of the 'pied Piper of Hamelin'; and not half an hour after, chancing to take down Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*, found Tom against the Maypole with a ring of Dancers about him. I suppose Tom survived in folk-lore till dear Lamb's time; but how he, a Cockney, knew of it, I don't know."

LETTER CXLIV (p. 161).—The passage about the "giant's vomit" was from the story of Polyphemus in Lamb's version of the *Odyssey*.

NOTES

LETTER CXLVI (p. 164).—Coleridge's *Friend* made its first appearance on the 1st of June 1809, and its last on March 15, 1810.

CHAPTER III

1809—1816

LETTER CXLVIII (p. 166).—*Mrs. Clarke.* The mistress of the Duke of York, second son of George III., and Commander-in-Chief of the Forces. "It was established beyond the possibility of doubt that the Duke had permitted Mrs. Clarke to interfere in military promotions; that he had given commissions at her recommendation; and that she had taken money for the recommendations." In consequence of the public excitement and indignation on the subject, the Duke resigned his office on the 20th of March of this year.

Godwin's little book. Godwin, *On Sepulchres.*

LETTER CXLIX (p. 169).—*Wordsworth's book.* The Convention of Cintra. "Concerning the relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal to each other, and to the common enemy at this crisis, and specifically as affected by the Convention of Cintra," etc. etc., by W. Wordsworth. Longmans. May 20, 1809.

Daniel, enriched with manuscript notes. These are printed in *Notes and Queries*, 1st Series, vi. 117.

Two volumes of Juvenile Poetry. "Poetry for Children, entirely original." By the Author of *Mrs. Leicester's School.* In two volumes. London. Printed for M. J. Godwin at the Juvenile Library, No. 44, Skinner Street. 1809.

Cœlebs. "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife," by Hannah More, published in 1809.

LETTER CL (p. 174).—For full information about Charles Lloyd, the father of Lamb's friends, Charles and Robert Lloyd, see Mr. E. V. Lucas's *Charles Lamb and the Lloyds.*

LETTER CLI (p. 176).—*The rich Auditors in Albemarle Street.*

The audience at the Lectures by Coleridge, given at the Royal Institution the year before.

My admiration of the pamphlet. Evidently refers to Wordsworth's pamphlet on the Convention of Cintra, mentioned in the preceding letter.

LETTER CLIII (p. 179). *Dr. Tuthill*, afterwards Sir George L. Tuthill, M.D., Physician to Bethlehem, Bridewell, and Westminster Hospitals.

Hazlitt has written a grammar. "A new and improved grammar of the English tongue for the use of schools . . . to which is added a new guide to the English tongue, in a letter to Mr. W. F. Mylius, author of the School Dictionary, by Edward Baldwin, Esq. (Godwin)." 1810.

LETTER CLV (p. 186).—See Lamb's Essay "On the Poetical Works of George Wither" (*Poems, Plays, and Essays*, and note upon it.) The annotated volume is now in the possession of Mr. A. C. Swinburne, who has published a full and very interesting account of it (see *Nineteenth Century*, Jan. 1886).

LETTER CLVI (p. 187).—*Winterslow, near Sarum.* The residence of William Hazlitt, on the border of Salisbury Plain. Charles and Mary Lamb spent their summer holiday with Mr. and Mrs. Hazlitt this year. Basil Montagu had written to Lamb suggesting to him to revise a MS. treatise on the subject of Capital Punishment.

LETTER CLVII (p. 189).—*H. Robinson.* Henry Crabb Robinson. See his delightful *Diaries* for frequent mention of Charles and Mary Lamb.

LETTER CLVIII (p. 190).—*Cram monsters in the voids of the maps.* Lamb was thinking of Swift's lines (in the "Ode to Poetry") about the geographers who—

> "On Afric downs
> Place elephants for want of towns."

LETTER CLIX (p. 191).—*Your continuation of the Essay on Epitaphs.* Wordsworth had published the first part of this essay in Coleridge's *Friend*, February 22, 1810. He published it later in separate form with additions. The "turgid epitaph"

referred to was one from a churchyard in Westmoreland, of the year 1693, of which Wordsworth thought it worth while to compose a simpler version in prose.

LETTER CLXI (p. 195).—*Your reply to the Edinburgh Review.* "Reformist's reply to the Edinburgh Review," 1810. "A pamphlet," says Hunt in his *Autobiography*, "which I wrote in defence of the *Review's* own reforming principles, which it had lately taken into its head to renounce as impracticable."

LETTER CLXII (p. 197).—John Lamb's brochure has at length come to light, and an account of it was first published by Mr. L. S. Livingston in the New York *Bookman* for January 1899. It is entitled, "A Letter to the Right Hon. William Windham on his opposition to Lord Erskine's Bill for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, London, 1810." Mr. Windham had taken the line, in the House of Commons, that the subject was one not fitted for legislation. John Lamb, in his protest, expressly insists on man's cruelty to *eels*, and dilates on the theme with much rhetorical effusiveness.

LETTER CLXIII (p. 198).—The letter congratulates William Hazlitt on the birth of his first child, or at least the first which survived.

H. Bunbury, Esq. (1750-1811). The caricaturist, friend of Johnson, Goldsmith, and Garrick.

Martin and the card-boys. Martin Burney and the rest of the little whist-coterie.

LETTER CLXIV (p. 199).—*To give your vote to-morrow.* H. Crabb Robinson, under date, March 16, 1811, writes: "C. Lamb stepped in to announce Dr. Tuthill's defeat as candidate for the post of physician to St. Luke's Hospital." The contest, Mrs. Procter informs me, was very severe, and many friends of the candidates bought governorships at £50 for the sake of votes. Basil Montagu bought one for Lamb.

LETTER CLXV (p. 200).—*The Well-bred Scholar.* I do not find any work of this name assigned to W. F. Mylius, who was a diligent compiler of school-books. He was a master at Christ's Hospital. Dr. Southey was a brother of the poet.

Going to eat turbot. At the annual dinner of old Christ's Hospital boys.

LETTER CLXVI (p. 203).—*The noblest conversational poem.* Wordsworth's *Excursion*, just published.

The whole surface of Hyde Park is dry crumbling sand. Early in August 1814, the three London Parks were thrown open to the public, in celebration of the Peace between England and France. There were fireworks and illuminations; Chinese Pagodas and "Temples of Concord" were erected; and the Parks were, in fact, converted into a vast Fair. It was two years before they recovered their usual verdure.

"*At the coming of the milder day.*" See Wordsworth's Poem, "Hart-Leap Well"—

> "She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
> That what we are, and have been, may be known;
> But at the coming of the milder day
> These monuments shall all be overgrown."

LETTER CLXVII (p. 208).—"*Remorse.*" Coleridge's tragedy, which, owing to the good offices of Lord Byron, had been brought out at Drury Lane, January 23, 1813, with a Prologue by Lamb. It ran twenty nights.

Old Jimmy Boyer. Rev. James Boyer, the former Head-Master of Christ's Hospital, while Lamb and Coleridge were at the school.

LETTER CLXVIII (p. 211).—*Time enough for the Quarterly.* Lamb's forthcoming Review of the *Excursion*. See the Review, and notes thereupon, in *Mrs. Leicester's School and other Writings*, etc.

LETTER CLXIX (p. 214).—*Your experience about tailors.* Wordsworth may have told Lamb a story of some tailor in his neighbourhood who had thrown himself over a precipice. If so, it is possible that James Hogg, in his volume of Parodies (the *Poetic Mirror*), published a year or more later, having heard the same story, called his Parody of the *Excursion*, the "Flying Tailor." Another explanation is possible. Lamb may already have seen Hogg's Parody in MS., and in this case

the opening paragraph of this letter may be simple, and rather mischievous *badinage*. The reference to Burton is obviously to Lamb's paper "On the Melancholy of Tailors," signed "Burton Junior," which appeared first in the *Champion*, Dec. 4, 1814.

W. H. is William Hazlitt, who had lately reviewed Wordsworth's *Excursion* in the *Examiner*. This Review was partially reprinted by Hazlitt in the *Round Table*, 1817.

The melancholy Jew. A Jew of the name of Levi had lately flung himself from the monument in Fish Street Hill.

Another Hylas. "An interesting little love-adventure which he (Hazlitt) met with down at the Lakes while he was on his first experimental trip in search of sitters, is so distinctly alluded to in a letter from Lamb to Wordsworth, that I shall just give what Lamb says about it, premising that Patmore had heard in his time of some story of my grandfather being struck by the charms of a village beauty in Wordsworth's neighbourhood, and of having narrowly escaped being ducked by the swains for his ill-appreciated attentions. Wordsworth had evidently described the whole affair in a letter to Lamb" (*Memoirs of William Hazlitt*, by W. C. Hazlitt, i. 105, 106).

LETTER CLXX (p. 217).—*I have read "It won't do."* The first words of Jeffrey's famous Review of the *Excursion* in the *Edinburgh*, November 1814, "This will never do!"

LETTER CLXXI (p. 220).—*Your successive book presents.* In 1815 Wordsworth published a New Edition of his Poems with the following title:—*Poems by William Wordsworth: including Lyrical Ballads, and the Miscellaneous Pieces of the Author. With Additional Poems, a new Preface, and a Supplementary Essay. In two Volumes.* Among the poems that appeared for the first time in this edition were "Yarrow Visited," "The Force of Prayer; or, The Founding of Bolton Abbey," "The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale," "Laodamia," "Yew Trees," "A Night Piece," and others. It was naturally on these that Lamb made his comments. He also refers to the various changes of text made since the appearance of the previous edition in 1807. Some of the former readings were restored

in later editions, perhaps in consequence of Lamb's remonstrances. The admirable line—

> "The stone-chat and the glancing sand-piper"

(as Lamb truly says, "a line quite alive") is one of these. It occurs in the beautiful poem "Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree," and in the 1815 edition had given place to the far inferior—

> "The stone-chat, or the sand-lark, restless Bird
> Piping along the margin of the lake."

The "substitution of a shell" to which Lamb alludes was in the poem "The blind Highland Boy," where the vessel in which the poor boy embarked was originally a washing-tub, but which was now exchanged (at the request of friends whose self-respect was wounded) for a turtle-shell.

The Preface is noble. The allusion in the words that follow is to a mention Wordsworth had made of Lamb, in citing a sentence from his Essay on Hogarth. He there speaks of Lamb as one of his "most esteemed friends." The "printed extracts from those first poems" refers to the extracts from an "Evening Walk" and "Descriptive Sketches," early poems first published in 1793.

The poems "by a female friend" were by Dorothy Wordsworth. "Three short pieces (now first published)," we read in the Preface, "are the work of a Female Friend, and the Reader to whom they may be acceptable is indebted to me for his pleasure."

An undoubtable picture of Milton. This picture, which came into Charles Lamb's possession after his brother's death, was given by him to Emma Isola.

The Latin Poems of V. Bourne. Cowper's friend, and Master at Westminster School. Lamb, as well as Cowper, wrote and printed various translations from Bourne's Latin Poems.

"*To them each evening had its glittering star*"—from the *Excursion*, Book V. "The man and his consort" are the matron and her husband on whose industrious lives these lines are a comment.

LETTER CLXXII (p. 225).—"*Yarrow Visited.*" The

lovely stanza referred to I would almost hope there is no need to cite, but it is a pleasure to repeat it:—

> "But thou that didst appear so fair
> To fond imagination,
> Dost rival in the light of day
> Her delicate creation."

The poem called by Lamb the "Boy-builders" is that better known as "Rural Architecture." It was first printed in 1800, and had a final stanza, omitted in 1815, ending with the lines—

> "Then, light-hearted boys, to the top of the crag,
> And I'll build up a giant with you."

I don't often go out a "may"ing;—"must" is the tense with me now. It is interesting to remember that Hood uses this antithesis with exquisite effect in his "Ode to Melancholy":—

> "Even as the blossoms of the *May*,
> Whose fragrance ends in *must*."

"*What is good for a bootless bene?*" The first line of the poem on Bolton Abbey:—

> "'What is good for a bootless bene?'
> With these dark words begins my tale;
> And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
> When Prayer is of no avail?"

Who looked over your proof-sheets and left "ordebo" in that line of Virgil? Wordsworth had cited in his preface Virgil's lines in the first Eclogue about the shepherd and the goats:—

> "Non ego vos posthac viridi projectus in antro
> Dumosa pendere procul de rupe *videbo*."

LETTER CLXXIII (p. 230).—Southey's *Roderick, the Last of the Goths*, was published in quarto, in 1814.

LETTER CLXXIV (p. 234). — *Hartley's intellectuals.* Hartley Coleridge, now just nineteen years of age, was at Oxford.

Spend a week at Poole's. Thomas Poole, a gentleman whose name has occurred already as the friend of Coleridge and Lamb. Poole succeeded to his father's business as a tanner at Nether-Stowey. Coleridge made his acquaintance, through friends in

Bristol, as early as 1794; and it was to be near Poole that he went to live at Stowey in the winter of 1796-97. It was thus that Nether-Stowey became, as Mrs. Henry Sandford, Poole's relative, truly says, "a centre of the leading intellectual impulses of the time." Among other friends of Poole's were Sir Humphrey Davy, the Wedgwood brothers, and John Rickman; and in a less intimate degree Wordsworth, Southey, and Clarkson. Poole retired from business about the year 1804, and thenceforth devoted himself to the interests of his native place, and to all questions affecting the welfare of the labouring classes. He died in 1837. An admirable memoir of Poole has been written by Mrs. Henry Sandford in her book *Thomas Poole and his Friends* (Macmillan and Co.).

LETTER CLXXV (p. 236).—*Alsager*. Thomas Massa Alsager. For twenty-eight years attached to the *Times* newspaper, in which he wrote the city and money articles. He further controlled the musical department of the paper. He did more than perhaps any man of his time to promote the study and performance of classical chamber music, especially Beethoven's Quartettes. Hence Lamb's allusion to the propriety of varying the spelling of his name. He died in 1846.

Heautontimorumenos. "The Self-tormentor," the title of a comedy of Terence.

Capell Lofft (1751-1824). The Whig lawyer, writer on legal and political subjects, and poet. He was a native of Bury St. Edmunds, and brought into notice the Suffolk poet, Bloomfield. He sometimes printed sonnets with his initials C. L., to the disgust of Lamb, who bore the same.

The juvenile Talfourd. This first mention of one who was afterwards to be Lamb's biographer deserves a word of comment. He was at this time a young man of twenty, living in chambers in Inner Temple Lane, and reading with Mr. Joseph Chitty, the Special Pleader. Talfourd had just before this been introduced to Lamb at the house of Mr. William Evans, of the India House, and editor of the *Pamphleteer*. I shall have occasion hereafter to mention this latter gentleman in connection with Lamb and Joseph Cottle.

LETTER CLXXVI (p. 240).—*Miss Hutchinson*, Mrs. Wordsworth's sister.

NOTES

LETTER CLXXIX (p. 249).—*The Political Sonnets and Ode.* The ode was evidently Wordsworth's Thanksgiving Ode, composed on the morning of the day appointed for a General Thanksgiving, January 18, 1816.

The Covent Garden Manager has declined accepting his Tragedy. Coleridge's play *Zapolya.* Though Byron's good offices were ineffectual in getting this second tragedy accepted by the managers, Byron introduced Coleridge to John Murray, which was the means (according to Moore) of its publication as *A Christmas Tale* a year later.

At a Chemist's Laboratory in Norfolk Street. This was probably Lamb's joke. He assumes that Coleridge would naturally choose a chemist's laboratory as being handy for opium purchases.

LETTER CLXXX (p. 251).—*The revise of the poems and letter.* The letter referred to was Wordsworth's *Letter to a Friend of Burns*, London, 1816. Wordsworth had been consulted by a friend of Burns as to the best mode of vindicating the reputation of the poet, which, it was alleged, had been much injured by the publication of Dr. Currie's *Life and Correspondence of Burns.*

Morgan is with us every day. John Morgan, Coleridge's old Bristol friend, and through life one of his kindest and staunchest supporters. He had a house at Calne, in Wiltshire, where Coleridge lived with him for many months at a time. Lamb was in all probability staying with Morgan when he wrote the letter that follows, dated from that town.

LETTER CLXXXI (p. 254).—*Marie.* Miss Betham's "Lay of Marie" (1816).

LETTER CLXXXII (p. 256). Henry Dodwell was a fellow-clerk of Lamb's in the India House. This exquisite letter has never before been printed as a whole. I quoted a portion of it in the Notes to a previous volume of this edition. The "Cobbetts" are of course the "Political Registers."

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